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**Motivation in Context:  
An Action Research Study in Singapore**

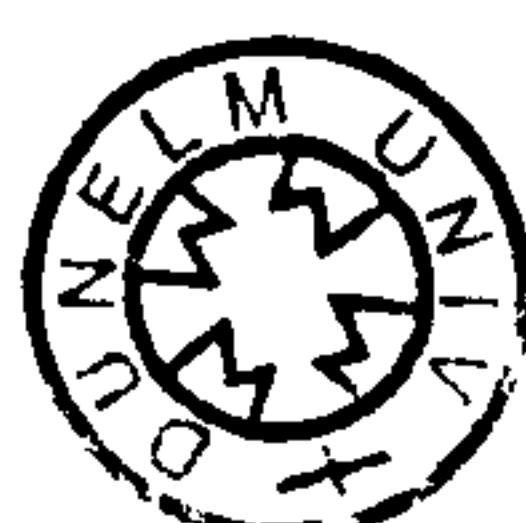
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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education**

**07 OCT 2008**

**School of Education  
Durham University  
2008**



## **Declaration**

***I declare that this thesis, which I submit for the degree of Doctor in Education at Durham University, is my own work. This is not the same as any other work which has previously been submitted for a degree in any other institutes or universities.***

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## **Abstract**

This research draws upon the dominant social psychological tradition of Gardner and associates, to examine how L2 motivation played out over time, in relation to the teaching of English, (an L2)<sup>1</sup>, to non-native speakers.

In order to investigate classroom-based fluctuations in motivation over time, a form of action research was utilised, involving two phases. Comparisons, and contrasts were made between two different sets of participants, in the same Grade level, and within the same school context.

An experimental approach to data collection was adopted, in which the first phase of research tested, and trialled a wide range of data collection techniques, including questionnaires, interviews, journals, field-notes, stimulated-recall interviews, and the examination of course documentation. The use of these was refined for the second phase, which adopted the use of a questionnaire, student essays, journals, field-notes, and the examination of course documentation.

This investigation added to the body of knowledge about L2 motivation by:

- highlighting some differences between the “predecisional” stage, (the sets of beliefs, and values), and the “postdecisional” stage of L2 motivation, (engagement), in context.
- illuminating how motivation in the situation-specific context is not stable, but dynamic.
- showing what key positive, and negative influences were perceived by the students, as impacting upon them, over time.
- pinpointing the underlying reasons why motivation fluctuated in the L2 classrooms, thus pointing to ways by which the motivational quality of the learning experience might be improved.
- highlighting some key methodological difficulties in respect of the use of traditional L2 self-report measures.

In sum, this investigation showed that teachers can not only conduct research about key motivational issues, (research-oriented), but also use that knowledge to refine, and improve their own professional practice, (action-oriented), and thus make minor, yet significant differences, to many L2 learners’ future life-chances.

<sup>1</sup> A second language, (an L2), is defined as the language learned by an individual after acquiring their first or native language. A non-native language which is widely used in the speech community (Li Wei, 2000, p. 248).



**“It is teachers who, in the end, will change the world  
of the school, by understanding it”.**

**Inscription on Lawrence Stenhouse’s memorial plaque at the  
University of East Anglia, UK.**

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“Mamma, can we go swimming, now?” Thank you to my three beautiful daughters, Charlotte, Annabel, and Sophia, who spent many years reading quietly beside me, whilst I worked on my computer. And, to my husband, Peter, who never stopped nodding his head enthusiastically, as I waffled on about conceptualisations, and operationalisations of motivation, 24/7. “We will go swimming, now”.

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Declaration</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>Dedication</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>List of Figures, Tables, and Abbreviations</b>	<b>VIII</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>X</b>
 <b>Chapter 1     The Introduction</b>	
1.1     The Statement of the Problem	1
1.2     The Purpose of the Investigation	4
1.3     The Conceptualisation of L2 Motivation Applied in the Investigation	6
1.4     The Significance of the Investigation	10
1.5     The Limitations of the Investigation	12
 <b>Chapter 2     The Literature Review</b>	
2.1     The Introduction	14
2.2     Understanding Motivation: Key Theories	22
2.2.1     Gardner and associates' (1985, 1993, 1995) Motivational Theories	22
2.2.2     Dornyei & Otto's (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation	33
2.2.3     Deci & Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory	41
2.2.4     Bandura's (1986) Self-Efficacy Theory	51
2.2.5     Interest	57
2.3     Understanding Motivation: Key Influences	65
2.4     Conclusions	76
 <b>Chapter 3     The Research Design</b>	
3.1     The Rationale for my use of Action Research	77
3.1.1     The Research Design: An Overview (Phase A and Phase B)	86
3.1.2     The Initial Questions (Phase A)	90
3.1.3     Choosing Appropriate Data Collection Techniques (Phase A)	91
3.1.4     Gathering the Information: Data Collection Techniques and Procedures (Phase A)	95
3.1.4.1     Questionnaire 1	96
3.1.4.2     Questionnaire 2 and Interview	98
3.1.4.3     The Participants' Journals	102
3.1.4.4     My Field-Notes	105
3.1.4.5     The Stimulated-Recall Interview	108



3.1.5	The Participants (Phase A)	110
3.1.6	The Analysis and Interpretation of the Data (Phase A)	113
3.1.7	The Ethical Considerations (Phase A)	115
3.1.8	The Research Lessons Learned (Phase A)	118
3.2	An Overview of the Research Design (Phase B)	123
3.2.1	The Refined Questions (Phase B)	125
3.2.2	Refining the Data Collection Techniques (Phase B)	126
3.2.3	Gathering the Information: Data Collection Techniques and Procedures (Phase B)	127
3.2.3.1	Questionnaire 1	128
3.2.3.2	Four 500-word Essays about Key L2 Motivational Themes	129
3.2.3.3	The Participants' Journals	130
3.2.3.4	My Field-Notes	131
3.2.4	The Participants (Phase B)	132
3.2.5	The Analysis and Interpretation of the Data (Phase B)	134
3.2.6	The Ethical Considerations (Phase B)	135
3.2.7	The Conclusion (Phase A and Phase B)	137
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>The Findings (Research-oriented)</b>	
4.1	The Overview	140
4.2	The "Predecisional" Stage of L2 Motivation	142
4.2.1	The "Predecisional Stage (Phase A and Phase B)	142
4.2.2	The Value of English to the Second Set of Participants	153
4.2.3	The Second Set of Participants' Perceived Proficiency in English	158
4.2.4	The Second Set of Participants' Views on the "Effort Versus Ability" L2 Motivational Debate	164
4.2.5	The Second Set of Participants' Views on the Advantages and/ or Disadvantages of Studying in an International School	169
4.2.6	Conclusion about the "Predecisional" Stage (Phase A and Phase B)	172
4.3	The "Postdecisional" Stage of L2 Motivation	175
4.3.1	How L2 Motivation Played out over Time (Phase A and Phase B)	175
4.3.2	Key Positive and Negative Influences on L2 Motivation (Phase A and Phase B)	181
4.3.3	Reasons Underlying Motivational Fluctuation (Phase A and Phase B)	199
4.4	L2 Motivation in Context and Multiple Realities (Phase A and Phase B)	241
4.5	L2 Motivation in Context and Some Methodological Issues (Phase A and Phase B)	249
4.6	Conclusions about the "Postdecisional" Stage (Phase A and Phase B)	253

<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Refining and Improving My Professional Practice in the Light of my Findings (Action-oriented)</b>	
5.1	Building upon the Findings: Potential Strategies	255
5.2	Teachers as “Generators” of Knowledge, and/ or “Apppliers” of Knowledge	275
5.3	Conclusions	282
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>The Discussion/ Conclusion</b>	
6.1	Contributions to Knowledge	283
6.2	Future Research Directions	290
6.3	The Conclusion	293

**List of Figures, Tables, and Abbreviations**

**Figures**

<i>Figure 2.1</i>	<i>Gardner’s (1985) Conceptualisation of Integrative Orientation</i>	24
<i>Figure 2.2</i>	<i>Gardner’s (1993) Socio-educational Model of Second Language Acquisition</i>	26
<i>Figure 2.3</i>	<i>Tremblay &amp; Gardner’s (1995) Model of L2 Motivation</i>	27
<i>Figure 2.4</i>	<i>Deci &amp; Ryan’s (1985) Taxonomy of Human Motivation</i>	43
<i>Figure 2.5</i>	<i>Model of the Relations between the Three Classes of Determinants in Bandura’s (1986) Conception of Triadic Reciprocity</i>	52

**Tables**

<i>Table 2.1:</i>	<i>Dornyei &amp; Otto’s (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation</i>	38
<i>Table 3.1:</i>	<i>The Research Design (Phase A)</i>	87
<i>Table 3.2:</i>	<i>The Research Design (Phase B)</i>	88
<i>Table 3.3:</i>	<i>The Data Collection Techniques (Phase A)</i>	95
<i>Table 3.4:</i>	<i>The Participants (Phase A)</i>	112
<i>Table 3.5:</i>	<i>The Data Analysis and Interpretation (Phase A)</i>	114
<i>Table 3.6:</i>	<i>The Data Collection Techniques (Phase B)</i>	127
<i>Table 3.7:</i>	<i>The Participants (Phase B)</i>	133
<i>Table 3.8:</i>	<i>The Data Analysis and Interpretation (Phase B)</i>	134



Table 4.1:	<i>The Participants' "Choice" Motivation (Phase A)</i>	143
Table 4.2:	<i>The Participants' "Choice" Motivation (Phase B)</i>	144
Table 4.3:	<i>The Value of English to the Participants (Phase B)</i>	154
Table 4.4:	<i>The Participants' Level of Satisfaction with their General Proficiency in English (Phase B)</i>	159
Table 4.5:	<i>Are the Participants Satisfied with their Level of Proficiency in the Four Key Skills Areas: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening? (Phase B)</i>	160
Table 4.6:	<i>The Participants' Goals (Phase B)</i>	162
Table 4.7:	<i>The Participants' Beliefs about whether Effort or Ability is more Important with regards to Learning English (Phase B)</i>	164
Table 4.8:	<i>The Participants' Views about the Advantages of Studying in an International School (Phase B)</i>	169
Table 4.9:	<i>The Participants' Views about the Disadvantages of Studying in an International School (Phase B)</i>	170
Table 4.10:	<i>The Number of Lessons in which the Participants Reported to be Motivated (O), both Motivated and not Motivated, (OX), and not Motivated, (X), (Phase A)</i>	176
Table 4.11:	<i>The Number of Lessons in which the Participants Reported to be Motivated, (O), both Motivated and not Motivated, (OX), and not Motivated, (X), (Phase B)</i>	177
Table 4.12:	<i>Key Positive Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase A)</i>	182
Table 4.13:	<i>Key Positive Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase B)</i>	183
Table 4.14:	<i>Key Negative Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase A)</i>	184
Table 4.15:	<i>Key Negative Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase B)</i>	185
Table 4.16:	<i>Jenny: The Best Female Student, (Grades), (Phase A)</i>	213
Table 4.17:	<i>Ken: The Best Male Student, (Grades), (Phase A)</i>	214
Table 4.18:	<i>Linda: Improved a Grade over the Quarter, (Phase A)</i>	216
Table 4.19:	<i>Georgie: The Best Female Student, (Grades), (Phase B)</i>	218
Table 4.20:	<i>Min Sung: The Best Male Student, (Grades), (Phase B)</i>	221
Table 4.21:	<i>June: Another Female Student with Good Grades (Phase B)</i>	224
Table 4.22:	<i>Chan: Dropped a Grade over the Quarter, (Phase A)</i>	227
Table 4.23:	<i>Edward: Doing Badly in English, (Grades), but not in other Subjects, (Phase A)</i>	228
Table 4.24:	<i>Tom: A Weak Male Student, (Grades), (Phase A)</i>	229
Table 4.25:	<i>Akio: A Weak Male Student, (Grades), (Phase B)</i>	231
Table 4.26:	<i>Yoon: A Weak Female Student, (Grades), (Phase B)</i>	234
Table 4.27:	<i>Midori: Another Weak Female Student, (Grades), (Phase B)</i>	237
Table 4.28:	<i>Bobby and the Multiple Realities Associated with L2 Motivation in Context (Phase A)</i>	243
Table 5.1:	<i>A Flexible framework for reconfiguring L2 lessons according to a core set of motivational principles</i>	274

**Abbreviations, (in alphabetical order)**

<b>EFL</b>	<b>: Learning English as a foreign language</b>
<b>ESL</b>	<b>: Learning English as a second language</b>
<b>IBO</b>	<b>: International Baccalaureate Organisation</b>
<b>L2</b>	<b>: A second language</b>
<b>MYP</b>	<b>: Middle Years Programme, (spans Grades 6-10)</b>
<b>SDT</b>	<b>: Self-determination theory</b>
<b>SLA</b>	<b>: Second language acquisition research</b>
<b>SRL</b>	<b>: Self-regulated learning</b>

<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>294</b>
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**Appendices, and Consent Forms**

<b>Phase A:</b>	<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>317</b>
	<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>319</b>
	<b>Appendix C</b>	<b>329</b>
	<b>Appendix D</b>	<b>330</b>
	<b>Appendix E</b>	<b>331</b>
<b>Phase B:</b>	<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>333</b>
	<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>335</b>
	<b>Appendix C</b>	<b>336</b>
	<b>Appendix D</b>	<b>337</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>		<b>338</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>		<b>340</b>
<b>Appendix 3</b>		<b>342</b>

## **Chapter 1 The Introduction**

### **1.1 The Statement of the Problem**

Motivation underpins all human behaviour. We cannot do anything without being motivated. However, we can be equally motivated not to do something. Motivation is responsible for “why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to do something” (Dornyei, 2000, p. 520).

The general importance of motivation in educational settings has been documented extensively. Elliott (2006) described motivation as being at the very core of achievement. In fact “For many people the key to faster learning turns out to lie in the strengthening of motivation” (Ball, 1996, p. 6). As Steinberg (1996) pointed out “curricular overhaul, instructional innovation, changes in how schools are organised and changes to teacher training and compensation will be largely ineffectual unless students come to school interested in, and committed to, learning” (p. 194).

However, although motivation is a universally important educational issue, its “whys and wherefores” may not be the same in different contexts. In my context in Singapore, culturally, and linguistically diverse L2 learners come from all over Asia to subject themselves to the educationally challenging experience of studying through the medium of English in order to obtain international qualifications, (accredited by the IBO), which many will subsequently use to gain entrance to universities or colleges in countries such as Australia, Canada, Singapore, UK, or USA. As such,

they seem prepared to persist with this challenging educational experience over a lengthy time-frame. Therefore, it could be assumed that they see great value, and meaning in mastering the English language which is viewed as an important motivational influence. This would possibly not be surprising given that Asia is one of the fastest growing regions in the world. English, in this region, seems to be regarded as “the most essential language for doing international business” (Komin, 1998, p. 265).

Having worked in Singapore for approximately 15 years with L2 learners, I have always been interested in the ways in which seemingly motivated language learners’ motivation plays out once they are placed in the situation-specific context of the L2 classrooms. After all, mastering English involves ongoing motivation over time, so there is more to it than what “gets students started”. Situation-specific factors could therefore have more of a bearing on these learners’ L2 motivation, since they already seem to value English highly. So what factors affect the motivational quality of their learning experience in the L2 classrooms?

I therefore decided to conduct a form of action research in order to understand how L2 motivation plays out over time for these learners in L2 classrooms. From their perspective, what key positive, and negative influences will impact upon it? By achieving a high level of understanding about this process, I would hopefully be able to use this to refine, and improve my professional practice, in order to support these L2 learners more. In sum, I would be theorising from the standpoint of action, in order to act with understanding of my own practical situation.



This approach would complement the dominant social psychological tradition of Gardner and associates in Canada who have spent more than three decades describing, measuring, and classifying L2 motivation, and also defining, and testing its role in theoretical models of the L2 learning process. As such, this type of research may not have fully accounted for the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation, and in some ways downplayed it. In fact, even in more mainstream psychological research, researchers have pointed out that one of the key challenges to motivation theory is to “..... illuminate “live” classroom events: an understanding of such phenomena is important if teachers are to develop strategies which help to foster adaptive motivational responses in their pupils” (Leo & Galloway, 1996, p. 41).

In research terms, it has been suggested that L2 motivation is even more complicated, and intricate than the general motivation to learn (a subject). Gardner (1979) postulated that this is because the learner is not learning new information which is already part of their own culture, but rather acquiring symbolic elements of a different ethnolinguistic community. In addition, they are not only being asked to learn about these, but they also have to make them part of their own language reservoir, which will involve imposing elements of another culture on their own lifespace (p. 193). This might not be the true because it does not account for the L2 learners’ situation of “parallel multiplicity” (Dornyei, 2001, p. 8). As Ushioda (1998) also pointed out, this student is often at the same time a student of mathematics, science, humanities (p. 83) as will be the case in my investigation. And, in fact, theories based on cognitive learning theory (McLaughlin, 1987; O’ Malley & Chamot, 1990) have emphasised similarities between the conscious learning processes of language learning, and the learning of other subjects.



## **1.2 The Purpose of the Investigation**

The purpose of my investigation is two-fold:

Firstly, to build up a detailed understanding of how L2 motivation plays out over time, in response to key influences in two L2 classrooms in this context, from the perspective of teenagers.

Secondly, to use my detailed understanding of this complex process to reflect on how I could potentially refine, and improve my professional practice, in order to support L2 learners in my classes.

L2 motivation is defined in this investigation as “the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and, (successfully or unsuccessfully), acted out” (Dornyei & Otto, 1998, p. 65).

This investigation will therefore focus on two key aspects of L2 motivation:

Firstly, its more general aspect stemming from the learners’ sets of beliefs, and values. What are their underlying meanings, and thought-processes? In fact, it might be these which could subsequently mediate/ moderate their L2 motivation in these L2 classrooms.

Secondly, its more situation-specific aspect in order to understand what key positive, and negative influences impact upon it over time in these L2 classrooms.

Action research has not traditionally been part of the L2 motivational research agenda due to the strong influence of quantitative social psychology on this research. Neither has it been part of the more mainstream psychological research agenda which has tended to focus on creating reductionist models which reduce the infinite numbers of potential determinants of human behaviour to a few key variables. However, it seems a particularly well-suited, and appropriate form of enquiry through which to investigate such a complex issue as long-term motivation which is not easily investigated empirically. And, in fact, investigating long-term motivation “offers insights into motivation from a different window and the results would have useful implications for teaching and learning” (Schunk, 2000, p. 119).

Thus, utilising a form of action research will enable me to complement these above-mentioned dominant paradigms of research which have focused more on the learners’ cognitions, and hence downplayed classroom dynamics. My investigation will contribute to knowledge about how L2 motivation plays out over time, from the perspective of teenagers, (research-oriented), as well as utilising this knowledge to refine, and improve my professional practice, (action-oriented). As Elliott (1991) pointed out “research is only educational when it is directed towards realising educational values in practice” (p. 4). This investigation will be loosely guided by Stringer’s (1999) Action Research Model which comprises an “interactive spiral” with three phases of research: “looking, thinking and acting”.

### **1.3 The Conceptualisation of L2 Motivation Applied in the Investigation**

In this investigation, L2 motivation is conceptualised in the following ways:

Firstly, in both general, and situation-specific terms. It is conceptualised not only as sets of beliefs, and values about L2 learning, but also as engagement, that is, how the learners behave in the L2 classrooms. These two conceptualisations mean that I can seek to understand not only their cognitions, (their motivation), but also their L2 learning behaviour in the L2 classrooms, (engagement). These two parts need to go “hand in hand”, (whilst being investigated separately), because it is perhaps the cognitions which may mediate, and shape L2 learning behaviour in the L2 classrooms. This is a similar approach to some mainstream motivational theorists (Ames, 1984; Ryan, 2000). Unfortunately, these two terms are often used synonymously in research. And in fact, this conceptualisation is slightly different from the way that one of the key L2 motivational researchers, Gardner, conceptualises motivation. Gardner (1985) conceptualised it as a “thing” with three components: “effort expended to achieve the goal, desire to achieve the goal and attitudes towards the activity involved in achieving the goal” (p. 51).

Gardner’s conceptualisation therefore puts both general, and situation-specific aspects of L2 motivation together in a whole. Whilst there may be nothing inherently wrong with this conceptualisation theoretically, it is still important to realise that operationalising these two different aspects of L2 motivation together in one survey may create some methodological difficulties associated with measuring situation-specific aspects of it, detached from the learning context. After all, desire would more

likely be associated with the sets of beliefs, and values aspect, whereas effort would more likely be associated with the engagement aspect. Attitudes would more likely be associated with both aspects. And, in fact, an individual might not be able to report realistically on their effort detached from the situation-specific context. If they can, then that might mean that L2 motivation is almost a fixed characteristic, or a personality-trait, that remains reasonably stable regardless of the happenings in the context. But clearly, desire, effort, and attitudes, may not be uncomplicated “static” constructs which will necessarily remain stable within a context. Furthermore, we cannot treat them as essentially non-problematic, and interpreted in much the same way by everyone, regardless of their ethnicity, and culture.

If L2 motivation can be conceptualised in both general, and situation-specific terms, it must have distinct stages. Heckhausen (1991) suggested that the sequence of events involved in being motivated must be separated into natural and discrete segments (p. 175). In fact, Heckhausen (1991) believed that there is a distinction between the “formation” of intentions, (a set of beliefs), and “implementation” of intentions, (engagement). Heckhausen (1991) and Heckhausen & Kuhl (1985) therefore conceptualised the motivational process as comprising the “predecisional stage”, when action is decided upon, (this corresponds roughly to “choice” motivation), and the “postdecisional stage”, when action takes place, and is maintained, (this corresponds roughly to “executive” motivation). However, there is still some variation on what this “sequence of events” involved in “being motivated” actually is. For example, Dornyei & Otto (1998) re-conceptualised this motivational process into three stages: the “preactional”, the “actional”, and the “postactional”, (which involves critical retrospection after action has been completed).



My investigation will only use the first two stages of this conceptualisation, because the participants will not come to the end of a learning period for some time, (the “postactional” stage), and in fact, remain in the “actional” stage, since they are school children in an institutionalised learning environment.

Hopefully, by conceptualising L2 motivation as having these two different stages means that I can attempt to account for its temporal aspect, which common-sense dictates must be of paramount importance in L2 classrooms. For example, at the start of the course the L2 learner may be highly motivated with regards to learning English for any number of reasons. However, once the course starts, this level of motivation may have already fluctuated. And in fact, the L2 learner’s motivation might be affected on a continual basis by key influences over an extended time-frame in the L2 classroom.

Secondly, L2 motivation is conceptualised as comprising both positive, and negative aspects, in my investigation. In L2 motivational research, a motive often seems to be characterised as a positive force. But this approach neglects the “negative” side of motivation, and therefore only focuses on part of the motivational picture. Therefore, in this investigation, it may come to light that there are key influences that would have a detrimental, rather than a positive effect on it, and in fact, instead of energising action, de-energise it. If we are trying to understand what is “motivating”, we also need to take account of what is “not motivating”.

By conceptualising L2 motivation in the above-mentioned ways, a more comprehensive L2 motivational construct will be able to be accessed. For, if we only



collected data once about L2 learners' motivation at the start of a learning period, or even one more time during the course of it, we would never discover how their L2 motivation plays out over time, in response to the events and happenings in the L2 classrooms. That would seem to be a missed opportunity, and a great shame, as it may be this situation-specific aspect that is of paramount importance with regards to these L2 learners, given their background.

## **1.4 The Significance of the Investigation**

This investigation will hopefully make a minor contribution to knowledge about L2 motivation on the basis of the following key reasons:

Firstly, it will collect data in a situation-specific context. Hence, it will be less detached from an authentic L2 learning context than is traditional L2 motivational research. This will be in line with an increasing amount of research which has recommended this more “situated” approach (Hickey, 1997; Parish Turner, 1994; Rueda & Dembo, 1995; Dornyei, 2000).

Secondly, it will provide data about not only L2 motivation conceptualised as sets of beliefs, and values, but also as engagement. This will give a unique opportunity to analyse, and evaluate the extent to which there might be differences between the general L2 motivation to learn English, and the L2 motivation when faced with events, and happenings in the L2 classroom. In fact, this approach will provide a “photo album” rather than a “snapshot” of L2 motivation.

Thirdly, it will provide an authentic account of how L2 motivation plays out in L2 classrooms over time. It will access the meaning used by the teenagers themselves as they interpret the world of the L2 classroom. This approach will not impose rigid psychologists’ categories conceived out of dominant traditions on these teenagers’ meanings. This approach fits in to a certain extent with other research which is centering around giving students’ “voice”, (see [www.consultingpupils.co.uk](http://www.consultingpupils.co.uk) for background on this movement). As Edwards (2004) pointed out “close-to-the-field

research, that can do justice to the meaning making that occurs there, is an important part of the responsibility of the educational research community” (p. 157).

Fourthly, it will be both research-oriented, in that it will focus on how L2 motivation plays out over time, from the perspective of teenagers, and action-oriented, in that it will focus on how to use this knowledge to refine, and improve my professional practice, in order to support L2 learners.

In sum, this investigation will raise awareness about a general, and universal motivational issue which transcends many different contexts. According to a British Council report (2004) “half the world’s population will be speaking or learning English by 2015” (p. 8). This underlines how increasingly important the practical side of L2 motivation will be in L2 classrooms, in different contexts all over the world, as educators seek to facilitate “continuing motivation” in their students. The sheer numbers who will be learning English in so many radically different contexts means that in the case of L2 motivational research, generalised solutions to problems simply may not work. As Guba, wrote in the forward to “Action Research” by Stringer (1999) “all problems are de facto local; inquiry must be decentralised to the local context” (p. IV).

## **1.5 The Limitations of the Investigation**

There are definite limitations to my investigation. The focus is extremely broad, and the number of participants is small. But, this is necessary to capture the whole dynamic motivational process of L2 learning over time.

In addition, even although some might argue that investigating how L2 motivation plays out over time from the perspective of teenagers is a complex issue, and clearly not one easily investigated empirically, I will not be deterred from trying. An analogy would be that many tests that children undergo at school only test what it is easy to test. However, what we perhaps should be testing is that which it is not easy to test. I am therefore going to focus on a topic which is not easy to research, but is clearly of fundamental importance in L2 motivational terms in my context.

Furthermore, although generalised solutions to problems may not work with regards to L2 motivation, small scale studies, (like this), may be equally as unhelpful, albeit in a different way, given their “uniqueness”. After all, a small scale investigation in Singapore might have little interest to those interested in L2 learners studying English in a post-colonial environment in Hong Kong, in a bilingual context such as Canada, or in a mono-lingual, and mono-cultural foreign language learning context such as Hungary. These L2 learners might all have radically different sets of beliefs, and values about L2 learning from the participants in my context. And in fact, as their L2 motivation plays out over time, they may also experience radically different key influences on it from the participants in this investigation.

Therefore, all that I can hope for is that my reflections will be able to be raised to an acceptable level of objectivity, and stand up to the critical scrutiny of fellow teachers, and/ or researchers in many different contexts. The insights gathered about how L2 motivation plays out over time, and how I could subsequently improve my professional practice may be unique to this investigation, but hopefully they would be considered by others to be “insightful accounts of processes which go beyond the particular story itself” (Pring in Chen & Van Maanen, 1999, p. 3). Dialogues, and debates will hopefully be started, hence achieving a degree of “discursive consciousness” (Elliott, 2003, p. 398).



## **Chapter 2 The Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Introduction**

There are at least three features about motivation that pose a challenge to those researching it. Firstly, it is an abstract concept not directly observable, (due to its internal processes, and states). In fact, there have been philosophical debates about the accessibility of one's self-knowledge for over a century, and this would encompass motivational variables. As Murphy & Alexander (2000) noted in their extensive research on motivational terminology, researchers, at least on the surface, often frame motivational constructs without noting any limitations, as though they are wholly conscious, accessible, and thereby readily testable. For the purposes of my investigation, I will take the position that the significant thoughts, and feelings of the participants that affect L2 learning during the prolonged language learning experience are conscious, and known to the participants. However, I acknowledge that this position may "suffer from a paucity of emotion and a surfeit of rationality" (Berliner, 1989, p. 330).

Secondly, it is a multi-dimensional construct. It might not be possible to represent it by means of simple measures, that is, the results of a few questionnaire items. And, we should not uncritically assume that a test can automatically measure what it purports to measure. In fact, any specific motivational measure is likely to represent only a segment of a more intricate psychological construct. It is important to recognise that there may be differences between the empirical self, and the actual self.

Thirdly, motivation is inconstant, and therefore might change dynamically over time. It is therefore questionable how accurately a one-off examination can represent the basis of motivation within a prolonged behavioural sequence like L2 learning. That is why the focus in my investigation will be on how L2 motivation plays out over time in L2 classrooms.

Debates have, (and are), being conducted about whether motivation is a fixed concept in the individual. Is it a unitary concept? What is the role of cognition versus emotion in motivation? Is motivation a function of a person's thoughts, (the cognitive view), rather than some instinct, need, drive, or state of arousal?

Further debates also centre around whether motivation is directly linked with achievement. In fact, motivation might only be indirectly related to learning outcomes, and/ or achievement because it could be "by definition an antecedent of behaviour rather than achievement" (Csizer & Dornyei, 2005, p. 20). It is true that motivated learners will demonstrate more persistence in their task behaviour which in turn may lead to increased achievement, but this relationship might be indirect. This is because achievement will be influenced by other factors such as ability, learning opportunities, and the instructional quality of the learning task.

On the one hand, researchers are keen to understand more about what is the basic "spring of action" in motivated behavior. Weiner (1974) suggested it is the rational search for understanding. Nicholls (1984) proposed that the prime motivator is the desire to demonstrate high ability, or to avoid demonstrating low ability, at least under certain conditions. Covington (1992) suggested the basic impetus for action is the

desire to protect one's self-worth, particularly by maintaining a belief that one is able. There is also an alternative explanation to the "ego-defensive" spring of action. This state is one in which persons are focused externally on the task, as opposed to internally on themselves, and is called "task involvement" (Nicholls, 1984). On the other hand, teachers are keen to understand more about how to motivate their students, or better still, help their students motivate themselves, and hence facilitate "continuing motivation". After all, research has shown adolescents' academic motivation to decline over time (Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Hartner, 1981).

It must be noted that the construct of motivation is grounded in a variety of rich, and complex theoretical traditions, (namely, linguistics, psychology, and education), and therefore has been conceptualised, and studied from widely differing perspectives, (even within disciplines), with little cross-referencing, and agreement of terminology. Various competing theories have therefore chosen different key factors, (out of an infinite number), to assign key roles in their motivational theories.

"When *I* choose a word", Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone "it means just what I chose it to mean-neither more nor less" (p. 116). Schunk (2000) used Lewis Carroll's oft-cited passage to suggest that motivational researchers have often behaved "like Humpty Dumpty" by renaming or redefining motivational constructs to fit their theoretical models, and research methodologies, with insufficient attention paid to extant conceptualisations. Using different jargon, and putting emphasis on different aspects of what is, in reality, the same phenomenon, (potential determinants of human behaviour), can therefore be confusing for both researchers, and/ or teachers. However, it is clearly beyond the scope of my investigation to analyse, and

evaluate the infinite number of motivational/ L2 motivational theories in this literature review.

Since my investigation is about L2 motivation, its logical theoretical entry point could be considered to be the dominant social psychological research tradition of Gardner and associates in Canada, who have spent at least the last three decades describing, measuring, and classifying L2 motivation, and also defining, and testing its role in theoretical models of the L2 learning process. This research tradition will form an integral part of my investigation's underlying theoretical foundations even although my investigation will focus more on the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation as it plays out over time, whereas this tradition has focused more on cognitions, and as such, perhaps downplayed classroom dynamics. Gardner and associates' (1985, 1993, 1995) theories will be outlined in 2.2.1.

And, in fact, since my investigation focuses on how L2 motivation plays out over time, it will be important to outline Dornyei & Otto's (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation, (2.2.2), which was written in response to the challenge of describing motivational processes over time, and includes a "preactional", "actional", and "postactional" stage of L2 motivation. As mentioned, my investigation will utilise the first two stages, for reasons set out in 1.3.

Mainstream motivational theory will also be drawn upon to provide an opportunity to examine L2 phenomena through a different "theoretical window". Wentzel & Wigfield (2007) stated that one of the many problems with many school-based motivational intervention programmes is their lack of clear theoretical foundations or



rationales to guide the intervention. And therefore, recently, Wentzel & Wigfield (2007) introduced some groundbreaking motivational intervention programmes which, in their opinion, had been successful because of their underlying motivational theoretical frameworks. Since my investigation has an action-oriented aspect to it, it seems logical to utilise some of these theories that have already undergone extensive scrutiny in school contexts, and have thus been considered to be useful in practical terms. These intervention programmes were typically based on a combination of several theories, for example, Guthrie et al.'s (2007) intervention project utilised a number of principles from Deci & Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, Bandura's (1986) Self-Efficacy Theory, and Interest Theory. Balfanz et al. (2007) in their Talent Development Middle School Programme also used Bandura's (1986) Self-Efficacy Theory.

Therefore, my investigation will utilise Deci & Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, which is outlined in 2.2.3, alongside their Cognitive Evaluation Theory. SDT is underpinned by the belief that individuals have three basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and social-relatedness. And, in fact, this theory already has strong links to the field of SLA, as attempts have been made in L2 research to incorporate some aspects of SDT in L2-specific models. In fact, L2 theorists have emphasised the importance of intrinsic motivation in the L2 classroom (Brown, 1981, 1990, 1994) and also fostering learner autonomy in it, in order to increase student motivation. As Ushioda (1996) stated "Autonomous language learners are by definition motivated learners" (p. 2).

Bandura's (1986) Self-Efficacy Theory, which is outlined in 2.2.4, will be utilised too, because this theory focuses on task-specific performance expectations, and that fits in well with my investigation, which is partly attempting to investigate how individuals are affected by the happenings, and events in the L2 classroom, and that might include skills, tasks, and/ or activities. In addition, throughout my teaching career in Singapore, many seemingly able Asian L2 learners have often told me that they felt totally despondent because they did not feel competent with regards to certain aspects of English, for example, grammar or speaking etc. Aspects of this theory could potentially be used to alter the self-efficacy beliefs of these types of L2 learners, given that their beliefs might not only be inaccurate, but also debilitating.

Interest research will also be utilised, which is outlined in 2.2.5. Recent research has shown that both the affective, and cognitive components of interest have biological roots (Hidi, 2003). Neuroscientific research on approach circuits in the brain (Davidson, 2000) and on seeking behaviour (Panksepp, 1998, 2000) indicated that interested activity has a biological foundation in all mammals. This theory might be particularly promising in terms of its potential practical utility in the L2 classrooms given these biological underpinnings.

With regards to all of the above, empirical research which supports, and/ or challenges their position will also be subsequently outlined in the relevant sections, where possible. It must be noted, however, that this investigation is not arguing that these are the only theories about L2 motivation, and/ or motivation. For example, other researchers may wish to use Expectancy-Value Theories, Weiner's (1986)

Attribution Theory, and/ or Goal Theories, to name but a few, depending upon the purpose of their investigation, and their particular context.

A theoretical purist might point out that I have selected a rather broad range of theories to draw upon, with quite different philosophical underpinnings. However, it is important not to lose sight of the purpose of my investigation, which is to utilise eclectic theories to theorise from the standpoint of action, to act with understanding of the practical situation of the L2 classroom in this context. And given this action-oriented aspect, I will not be pursuing so-called “knowledge” in a dispassionate way, by testing out some hypotheses about just one or two theories. After all, in action research, experience is privileged over theory (Bridges, 2004, p. 184). That is, however, not to say that theoretical abstraction has a subordinate role in the development of practical wisdom. Elliott (1994) suggested that “Action research leaves a role for the educational theorist in the university as a supplier of theoretical resources for teachers to use in reflecting about and developing their practice” (p. 140). And, in fact, recently, more researchers are calling for “use-inspired” research about motivation (Martin, 2008).

In addition, as well as looking at theoretical ways of understanding L2 motivation, empirical research which documents what key influences might impact upon motivation, and/ or L2 motivation will also be outlined in 2.3. Ushioda (1996) pointed out that in the context of institutionalised learning, the common experience would seem to be motivational flux, not stability. And, in fact, in my particular investigation, given its action-oriented aspect, I must seek to understand what is affecting the

motivational quality of the learning experience. After all, that may be the “building blocks” of L2 motivation.

In sum, with regards to theories, those chosen seem to be either theoretically appropriate, and/ or relevant to my investigation, or had been regarded as being useful in key motivational intervention programmes, and as such, it will be imperative to build my investigation on these theoretical underpinnings. In **Chapter 4**, I will analyse, and evaluate the extent to which these theoretical ways of understanding L2 motivation, and/ or motivation could partly help explain the phenomena demonstrated in the L2 classrooms in this context, (research-oriented). After all, as Gardner (1985) stated “a true test of any theoretical formulation is not only its ability to explain and account for phenomena which have been demonstrated, but also its ability to provide suggestions for further investigations, to raise new questions, to promote further developments and open new horizons” (p. 166). In **Chapter 5**, I will analyse, and evaluate the extent to which these theories might also be useful in helping me refine, and improve my professional practice in this context, based on the findings, (action-oriented).

And with regards to empirical research about key influences, I will analyse, and evaluate the extent to which my investigation’s findings about these, (set out in **Chapter 4**), are in line with this other empirical research, (research-oriented).



## **2.2 Understanding Motivation: Key Theories**

### **2.2.1 Gardner and associates' (1985, 1993, 1995) Motivational Theories**

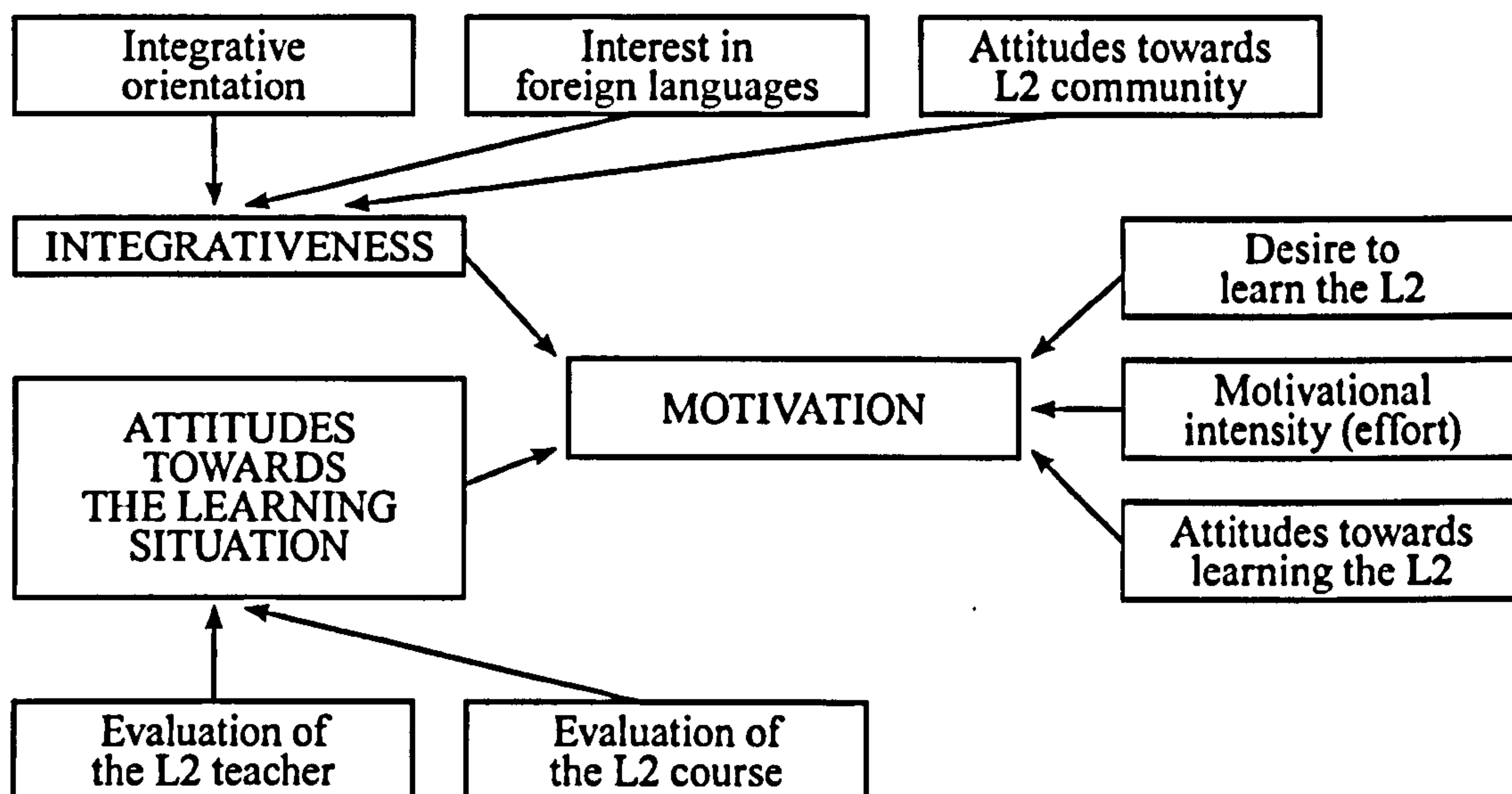
This influential group started researching motivation in Canada in the 1950's, and contributed the seminal work of Gardner & Lambert (1959) and Gardner & Lambert (1972). As discussed in 1.1, Gardner's social psychological approach is underpinned by the assumption that learning a second language, (an L2), is different from learning other subjects. This might not be true. Although this issue is beyond the scope of my particular investigation, it is still important to be aware of, though I will not be comparing, and contrasting L2 motivation, with motivation in a specific subject area, for example, Humanities or Mathematics.

Gardner & Lambert (1972) proposed that motivation was a significant cause of variability in language learning success, and its effect was independent of ability or aptitude factors. Gardner & Lambert (1972) viewed languages as mediating factors between different ethnolinguistic communities in multicultural settings. Therefore, they postulated that the motivation to learn an L2 was the primary force responsible for enhancing or hindering intercultural communication, and affiliation. The key tenet from this perspective was that the individual's attitudes to the L2, and the L2 target language group, as well as their ethnocentric orientation in general, would exert a direct influence over their L2 learning behaviour. It will be important to consider to what extent these views might be true in my investigation. However, this position does not seem to account for the fact that there may be differences between the

concept of attitude, (especially attitudes to the target language culture), and the concept of motivation.

A key issue in Gardner's (1985) motivation theory is the relationship between motivation, and orientation. Orientation is Gardner's term for a "goal". The differences between "integrative", and "instrumental" orientation have perhaps become two of the most widely documented, and utilised concepts in the field of L2 motivation research to date. The former refers to a positive disposition to the L2 target language group, and the desire to interact with them, and even become similar to valued members of that community, and the latter to potential pragmatic gains in learning an L2, for example, improving one's career prospects. Gardner & Lambert (1972) hypothesised that "an integrative orientation would sustain better, the long-term motivation needed for the very demanding task of learning a language" (p. 132). And in fact a large body of research over the years also backs up this claim that integrativeness is the most powerful general component of the student's generalised language-related affective disposition, determining language choice, and the general level of effort the students intend to invest in the learning process (Dornyei & Clement, 2000; Cziser & Dornyei, 2005). *Figure 2.1* sets out Gardner's (1985) Conceptualisation of Integrative Orientation.

*Figure 2.1 Gardner's (1985) Conceptualisation of Integrative Orientation*



In this globalised society, however, I have some doubts about individuals wanting to “integrate” with one particular so-called L2 target language group, and become like their “valuable” members. Given that English is spoken in so many different countries all over the world, I am confused about who this one particular target language group are that the learners are attempting to integrate with. In fact, with regards to my context, I wonder if L2 learners are learning English to integrate with one particular set of English speakers, for example, “Americans” in America, or “British” people in the UK. One other problem related to this issue is that students are less likely nowadays to have “stable points of origin, clear and final destinations and coherent group identities” (Breckenridge & Appadurai, in Rizvi, 2000, p. 209).

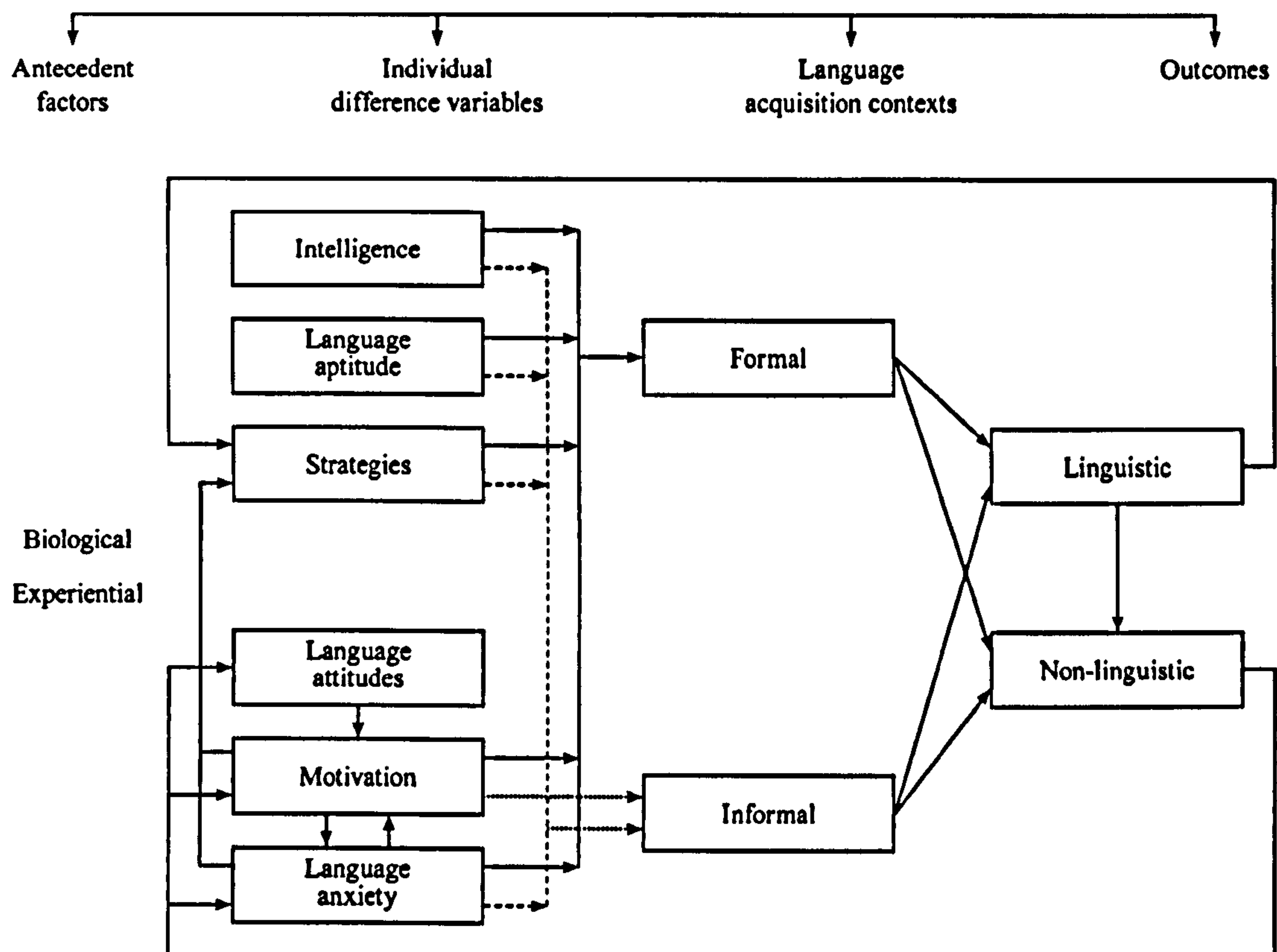
And furthermore, what do these findings about integrative, and instrumental orientation mean for L2 teachers? For example, what will they do if their students are instrumentally oriented? Should they attempt to help them become integratively oriented? And, if so, how? My investigation should contribute empirical evidence

about whether the Asian participants in my investigation are integratively, and/ or instrumentally oriented, and what are the consequences of this in the L2 classrooms in this context.

Gardner & MacIntyre (1993) also devised a general learning model labelled the socio-educational model of SLA. This theory is concerned with the role of various individual difference characteristics of the student in the learning of the L2. Therefore, it separates clearly four distinct aspects of the SLA process into: antecedent factors, (these can be biological or experiential, such as gender, age or learning history), individual difference, (learner variables), language acquisition contexts, and learning outcomes. The main learner variables include intelligence, language aptitude, language learning strategies, language attitudes, motivation and language anxiety. These therefore affect L2 attainment, resulting in linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes. This type of theory is very general, and “broadbrush”, with such miniscule focus on motivation, and most specifically the temporal aspect, that it perhaps has little relevance to my investigation. Figure 2.2 sets out this model.

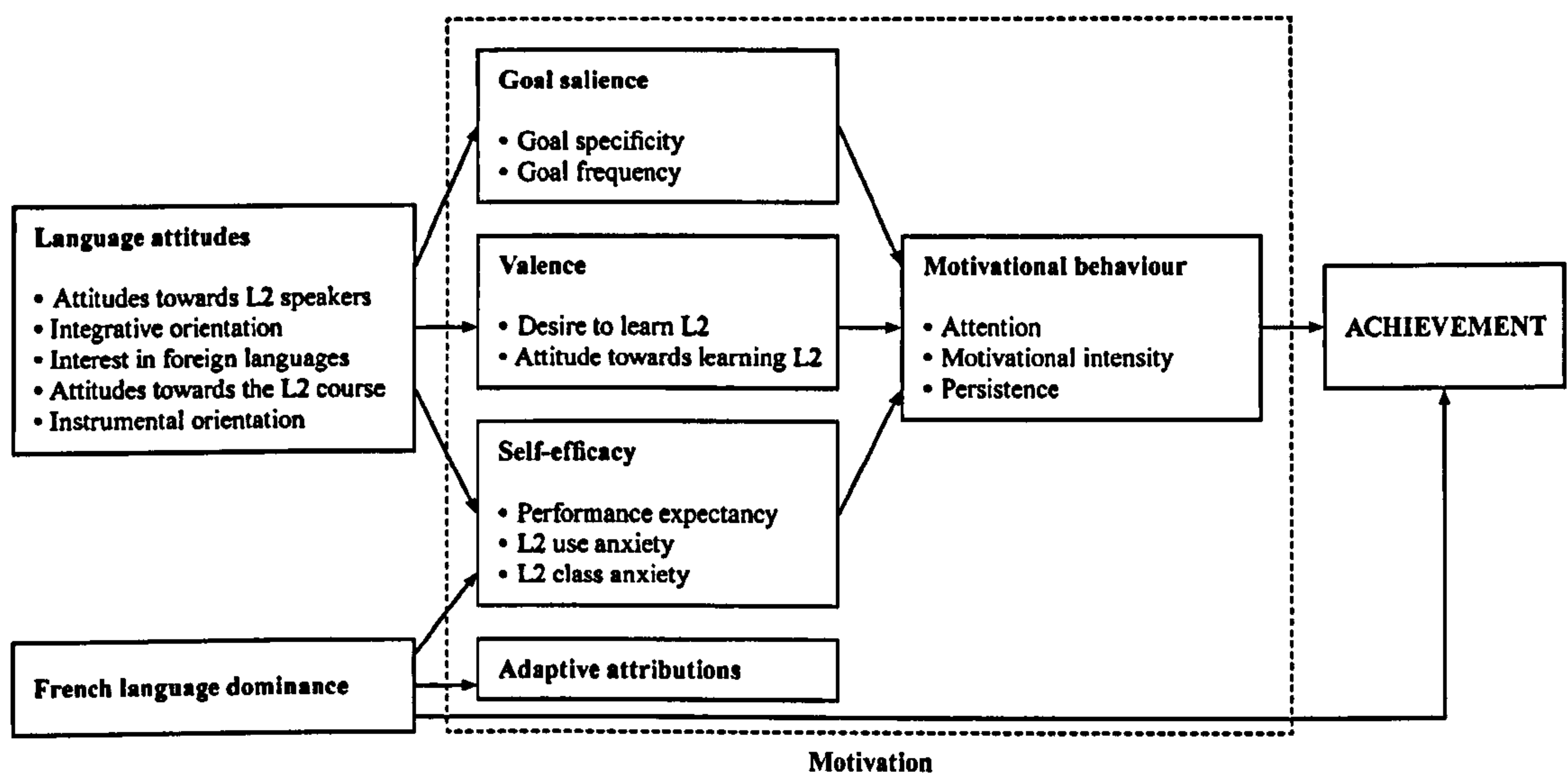


Figure 2.2 Gardner's (1993) Socio-educational Model of Second Language Acquisition



However, by the 1990's, and in response to calls for "the adoption of a wider vision of motivation", Tremblay & Gardner (1995, p. 505) extended Gardner's social psychological construct of L2 motivation by incorporating into it new elements from expectancy-value, and goal theories. The proposed extended model suggested a language attitudes → motivational behaviour → achievement sequence. The novel element was the three mediating factors between attitudes, and behaviour: goal salience, valence, and self-efficacy. The benefits were that this model offered a synthesis of the earlier socially-grounded construct with more recent cognitive motivational theories. The new model was empirically tested, and in a sample of 75 students learning French, a statistically adequate goodness-of-fit index was demonstrated. *Figure 2.3* sets out this model.

*Figure 2.3 Tremblay & Gardner's (1995) Model of L2 Motivation*



In general, with regards to Gardner and associates' theories, they might not be able to fully describe the actual patterns of motivational influences relevant to countless numbers of L2 learners outwith the Canadian context because they are too general. And in fact, even within the Canadian context, Norton Pierce (1995) also suggested that the theories were inadequate to describe the pattern of actual motivational influences relevant to her specific sample of immigrant women, who came to the learning situation with the "baggage" of social history, and personal identity. Norton (2000) introduced the concept of "investment" to describe the socially, and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn, and practice it.

Gardner also created the Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery, (AMTB), (see Gardner, 1985, Appendix). By way of background information, Gardner (1985) used quantitative social psychology's self-report surveys to assess attitudes, for the purposes of assessing the sets of beliefs, and values typically associated with L2

motivation. The AMTB is a multi-component motivation test which operationalises the main constituents of his theory, as well as introducing language anxiety measures, and an index of parental encouragement. Adaptations of this test have been used in several data-based studies of L2 motivation all over the world (Clement et al., 1994; Kraemer, 1993). Although this is a frequently-used standardised instrument with well-documented psychometric properties, and good construct, and predictive validity (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993), I chose not to utilise either Gardner's conceptualisation, (as discussed in 1.3), or his subsequent operationalisation because my investigation will be attempting to put the spotlight onto the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation, as it plays out over time in the L2 classroom. And, as such, it would therefore still not be adequate for my purposes to use this measure at two or even three time points, because this approach would still not capture the happenings, and events in the L2 classrooms that might affect L2 motivation on an ongoing basis over time.

In fact, Dornyei (1990) Clement et al. (1994) and Dornyei et al. (1996) have all recently created L2 motivational questionnaires which have typically utilised Gardner's (1985) conceptualisation of L2 motivation. These tend to utilise scaling techniques, most typically, a 6-point Likert scale, and/ or a 7-point semantic differential scale. Questions are centred around key L2 motivational themes. The respondents have to mark a choice, rather than write answers to open-ended items. These choices are based upon the individual's responses to a series of sentences or adjectives, as measured from 1-6, and/ or 1-7, on these scales. No background information is included. The responses are subsequently processed by means of various descriptive or inferential statistical procedures.

Let us now look at Clement et al.'s (1994) motivational questionnaire in order to understand the methodological position of my investigation further. This questionnaire claims to measure how motivated an individual is to learn English based on their responses to three types of questions related to Gardner's (1985) conceptualisation, (see 1.3). It attempts to find out how much an individual values English. Thus, a series of 20 statements is set out in random order, in response to this main L2 motivational theme, "studying English is very important to me because....." Examples of responses provided in the questionnaire are "because I would like to meet foreigners with whom I can speak English", or "because it will help me when travelling".

In addition, it attempts to measure how much effort an individual is willing to put into learning English. For example, individuals rate statements like "To be honest, I very often skimp on my English homework". "In my work, I seldom do more than necessary".

Finally, it attempts to measure an individual's attitudes towards learning English. There are approximately 20 questions related to this theme. For example, "I really like learning English". And, many questions are included about specific attitudes to the "British", and the "Americans". Question 30 asks the respondent to rate "The British are reliable and honest" on a six-point Likert scale.

This type of measuring instrument appears to be measuring individuals' general motivation to learn English in a way that is somewhat detached from the situation-specific context. It may be highly effective in predicting initial enrolment in a course



or the initial intention to learn a language. However, it may not be entirely suitable for accessing reliable data about the “actional” stage of the L2 motivational process. With regards to effort, individuals may not be able to predict accurately how much effort they are going to put into learning English detached from the whole series of happenings, and events in the L2 classroom. Murphy & Alexander (2000) also raised similar concerns to mine about the accuracy of individuals’ reports of their motivation. In addition, they also raised some problems associated with relying on self-report measures, without the benefits of behavioural corollaries. In fact, this is exactly what these above-described instruments do. Interestingly, recent research in the related area of Self-Regulated Learning has also picked up on this key methodological issue in a different form. Winne & Jamieson-Noel (2002) investigated the accuracy of college students’ self-reports of their study methods, and achievement gains, by comparing trace measures of SRL to their responses to self-report measures. Traces are defined as observable indicators about cognition that students create as they engage in a task (Winne & Perry, 2000). Their results showed that self-reports are often incongruous with trace measures of self-regulatory processes when studied in a specialised learning environment. These are the reasons why I will attempt to not only ask about the individuals’ general, and situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation, as well as also observe it, in its situation-specific context, as it plays out over time, as stated in 1.2.

In addition, with regards to the section on questions about attitudes in this measuring instrument, the ones in Clement’s (1994) questionnaire may not be suitable for every context. Measuring how much an individual wants to become like, and/ or identify with the target language group appears to be a recurring, and dominant theme

in traditional L2 motivational research. However, Clement (1994) wrote his questionnaire firstly in Hungarian for EFL learners in this mono-lingual country. In Hungary, there is a choice between several languages in school, for example, Russian, German, French or English, so therefore if a person chooses English it may be that they identify with British, and/ or American culture etc. But, in my particular context, a highly motivated individual who wants to do business globally from a base in Vietnam, for example, could perhaps obtain a low score on these questions, because they have no interest in becoming like one particular target language group. Hence, they could appear to be lacking in L2 motivation, if they filled in this questionnaire. Therefore, to adopt a “one-size-fits-all” questionnaire in radically different contexts could be considered to be misguided.

In response to an ever-increasing number of queries about whether L2 motivation is stable over time, Gardner (2001) examined whether the measures of motivation from the AMTB, (Desire to learn the language, Motivational intensity, and Attitudes towards learning the language), as well as other attitudes, for example, Attitudes toward the Learning Situation, to see if they were stable over time, and which were the most, and the least stable. He tested students twice, once in September, just after classes began, and again in March, a few weeks before classes ended. It is of great interest to note that he found that the measures of attitudes towards Motivation, and even the Learning Situation, were relatively flexible, showing that some affective variables are capable of change. This was a very positive finding for the field of L2 motivational research in general because it shows that the construct of L2 motivation has the potential to be used in more educationally powerful ways than just classifying, and/ or categorising learners motivationally, and also rationalising their progress or

lack thereof. My investigation must seek to provide further empirical data about potential L2 motivational fluctuation in the situation-specific context over time, in order to contribute to this key debate.

In sum, although Gardner was not unaware of the importance of the learning situation in shaping student motivation, the main emphasis in the Gardnerian social psychological tradition has not been on elaborating the range of possible motivational antecedents, (many of which would be related to the classroom environment), but on determining whether motivation has been aroused, in relation to the impact of other non-motivational factors, for example, intelligence. My investigation will attempt to complement this key paradigm by investigating similar L2 motivational themes from a rather different perspective, that is, with a specific focus on the L2 classroom dynamics that arouse motivation, (or not as the case may be), and hence attempt to understand more about not just whether it is aroused, but what is arousing it in the situation-specific context.

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### **Chapter 2.2.2 Dornyei & Otto's (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation**

The temporal dimension of L2 motivation is possibly the most fascinating, yet challenging aspect to deal with if researching about motivation, because as introduced previously, it is not the “getting started” aspect of L2 learning that is possibly problematic, but the “keeping on going” aspect, that is. This theory could perhaps be one of the most directly relevant theories to my investigation given its prominent temporal dimension.

As discussed in 1.3, Heckhausen (1991) and Heckhausen & Kuhl (1985) postulated that the motivational process comprised two phases, the “predecisional phase”, (the intention formation process), and the “postdecisional phase”, (the implementation process). This is often referred to as Action Control Theory. Dornyei & Otto's (1998) model contained two main dimensions: an action sequence dimension, with three distinct phases, (the “preactional”, “actional”, and “postactional” stages), and a motivational influences dimension on each of these stages. In fact, Dornyei & Otto (1998) postulated that each stage of the action sequence will have different motivational influences. I discussed the rationale for only using the first two phases in my investigation in 1.3. After all, the participants in this investigation are in an institutionalised learning environment, and could remain in the second phase, (the “actional” phase), for most of their time at the school, given that in this context, they cannot suddenly make the decision to stop learning English, or start doing something else, for example, learning in Mandarin, unless, of course, they leave the school.



With regards to the action sequence dimension, it concerns the process of choosing a course of action to be carried out, and the first phase, (the “preactional” phase), is divided into three subprocesses: goal setting, intention formation, and initiation of intention enactment, (putting the plans into action). Goal setting is the first concrete decision the L2 learner has to take, but it does not directly initiate action. The immediate antecedent of action in this model is the intention, which Dornyei & Otto (1998) saw as qualitatively different from a “goal”, in that it involves commitment. Therefore, adding commitment to a goal is a crucial step in the motivational process, but it is still not sufficient in itself to energise action, if the goal is not translated into the concrete steps the individual needs to take. Thus, the final step in generating a fully operational intention is to develop a manageable action plan, which contains the necessary technical details regarding the planned action, namely the action schemata, (that is, concrete guidelines such as subtasks to implement, and a number of relevant strategies to follow), and the time-frame, (that is, temporal specifications, for example, “I’ll get down to it tomorrow”). Although an intention is the immediate antecedent of action, action might not follow automatically from it. In fact, there are two necessary conditions for it: the availability of the necessary means and resources, and the start condition.

After this phase, the L2 learner has to “cross the rubicon of action” into the “actional” phase, (the second phase of the process). This is also known as “executive motivation”, and could possibly be the most significant phase of the motivational process, and the one which has been downplayed by the dominant research paradigms, but will be the key focus of research in my investigation. During this phase, three basic processes come into effect: subtask generation and implementation,

a complex ongoing appraisal process, and the application of a variety of action control mechanisms. These involve self-regulatory mechanisms that are called into force in order to enhance, scaffold or protect learning-specific action; active use of such mechanisms may “save” the action when ongoing monitoring reveals that progress is slowing, halting or backsliding. For the purposes of their model, Dornyei & Otto (1998) distinguished between three types of self-regulatory strategy: motivation maintenance strategies, language learning strategies, and goal-setting strategies.

It is important to note that the “preactional” phase, however, may not directly relate to the context of my investigation, given that as mentioned previously, the participants are already fully “signed up” in an international school, and perhaps this part of the action sequence might be over for them. And, in fact, given that they are children, it could have been their parents, and/ or families who realised their own wishes, and desires, turning them into goals, intentions, initiation of intentions etc on behalf of their children, and/ or in collaboration with them. Therefore, these children are not an “ahistoric” learners, and “blank-canvas” when they step into the L2 classrooms. And whilst it might be better to have participants who would be completely new to learning English in my investigation, in order to find out more about the “preactional” stage, in the most realistic way possible, it would be logistically impossible in this school, to get completely “new” learners in this year level, (Grade 10).

Therefore, for the purposes of my investigation, I will take the view that at the start of the learning period, the participants are in some form of “preactional” phase, but also concede that it is unlikely to be the original “preactional” phase which in reality

could have happened as described above. And, in fact, it will be beyond the scope of my investigation to focus on the complex action sequence within the “preactional” phase. In fact, I will be more interested in accessing the key influences during two key phases, the “preactional”, and “actional”. Of particular interest, will be how the cumulative or resultant forces of all the motivational forces active during the “preactional” phase, become affected by a new set of motivational influences that come into force only once action has started, (in the L2 classrooms).

Therefore, what motivational influences will fuel these two key phases of the action sequence? As mentioned, the “preactional” phase starts off with the goal-setting sequence. In this phase, there are four main motivational factors that fuel the process. Firstly, there is an individual’s subjective values and norms that have developed during the past, and these will interplay with incentive values, that is, intrinsic pleasure, and/ or instrumental benefits. This is followed by the value preferences, and the external environment, for example, expectations of the family, teachers, and school climate.

This is then followed by the intention formation sequence in which the individual is influenced by their expectancy of success, the perceived relevance of their goal, and the accompanying cost-benefit calculations. In addition, the intention formation is also assumed to be influenced by need for achievement, and fear of failure, self-determination, and various goal properties. In addition, the availability of task opportunities and options, the learners’ beliefs about L2 learning, their knowledge of learning strategies, and sufficient domain-specific knowledge are all determinants of the quality of the action plan. These factors form influential predispositions in the

learners about the learning process, and this is a key area that my investigation will focus upon. Finally, there still might need to be a final “push” for example, some sort of urgency, powerful external demands, (that is, the learner needs to pass an exam etc), and a unique opportunity, (that is, foreign travel etc).

Then with regards to motivational influences in the third part of this “preactional” phase, (the initiation of intention enactment), the individual really considers whether they want to start the process, and cross into the “actional” stage. They are influenced by whether they have what Kuhl (1987) described as, an action versus state orientation, their perceived behavioural control, (that is, the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour), distracting influences and obstacles, (that is, things that would stand in the way of action implementation), and finally, the perceived consequences of not acting.

With regards to motivational influences in the “actional” phase, the most important influence on ongoing learning, is the perceived quality of the learning experience. Then there is the perceived contingent relationship between action and outcome and the perceived progress, (that is, the learner will constantly evaluate how well they perceive themselves to be doing). In addition, another powerful influence will be their sense of self-determination/ autonomy and, of course, the influence of teachers, and parents. Particularly featured aspects of how teachers structure classroom life are the type of performance appraisal, and reward structure, and the more general classroom goal structure. In addition, other external sources are the influence of the learner group, and the classroom climate. Furthermore, task conflict, competing action tendencies, other distracting influences, and the availability of



action alternatives could all have a weakening effect on the resultant motivational force associated with the particular course of action. That is why knowledge of, and skills in, using self-regulatory strategies such as learning strategies, goal-setting strategies, and motivational maintenance strategies constitute an important source of scaffolding, and enhancing motivation. Further negative influences are provided by the costs involved in pursuing the activity. Finally, the last motivational factor listed here is the perceived consequences of action abandonment. *Table 2.1* sets out Dornyei & Otto's (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation.

*Table 2.1: Dornyei & Otto's (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation*

*The "Preactional" Phase: Phase I*

Phase	Action Sequence	Motivational Influences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal setting</li> </ul>	IA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language related subjective values and norms (integrativeness)</li> <li>• Incentive values associated with L2 learning/ proficiency               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- intrinsic pleasure</li> <li>- instrumental benefits</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Perceived potency of potential goal</li> <li>• Environmental effects: expectations of family, teachers, school climate</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intention formation</li> </ul>	IB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectancy of success               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- linguistic self-confidence</li> <li>- amount of expected support</li> <li>- L2 anxiety</li> <li>- perceived L2 competence</li> <li>- quality and quantity of previous L2 contact</li> <li>- causal attributions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Perceived relevance of the goal; cost-benefit calculations</li> <li>• Need for achievement</li> <li>• Degree of self-determination (type of regulation)</li> <li>• Goal properties               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- goal type</li> <li>- goal specificity</li> <li>- goal proximity</li> <li>- goal harmony/conflict</li> <li>- level of aspiration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Availability of task opportunities</li> <li>• Learner beliefs about L2 learning; knowledge of learning strategies; domain-specific knowledge</li> <li>• Urgency; external demands; unique opportunity</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiation of intention enactment</li> </ul>	IC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action versus state orientation</li> <li>• Perceived behavioural control</li> <li>• Distracting influences or obstacles</li> <li>• Action versus state orientation</li> <li>• Perceived behavioural control</li> </ul>
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The “Actional” Phase: Phase 2

Phase	Action Sequence	Motivational Influences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Actional” Phase</li> </ul>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of learning experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- novelty</li> <li>- pleasantness</li> <li>- goal/ need significance</li> <li>- coping potential</li> <li>- self and social image</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Perceived contingent relationship between action and outcome; perceived progress; success</li> <li>• Sense of self-determination/ autonomy</li> <li>• Teachers’ /parents’ influence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- autonomy supporting/controlling</li> <li>- affiliative motive</li> <li>- direct socialisation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

The “Postactional” Phase: Phase 3

Phase	Action Sequence	Motivational Influences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Postactional” Phase</li> </ul>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attributional factors; attributional style and biases</li> <li>• Self-concept beliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- self-confidence/self-efficacy</li> <li>- self-competence</li> <li>- self-worth</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Evaluation/Attributional cues; feedback</li> </ul>

In fact, Williams & Burden (1997) also created a theoretical framework of L2 motivation, with a focus on the internal, and external factors that impact upon L2 motivation. However, it had no action sequence dimension. And therefore, it does not address which internal, and external influences are related to different stages of the action sequence. Furthermore, in reality, there will probably be a more complicated, and interactive relationship between influences on L2 motivation generated internally, (within the individual), and generated externally, (from the broader sociocultural context, and from the immediate learning context). After all, “Individual effort and sociocultural activity are mutually embedded, as are the forest and the trees, and..... it is essential to understand how they constitute each other. Rather than according primacy to the role of sociocultural activity or of the individual,

the aim is to recognise the essential and inseparable roles of societal heritage, social engagement and individual efforts” (Rogoff, 1990, p. 25 in Atkinson, 2002).

In sum, it will be of key research interest to analyse, and evaluate the extent to which the motivational influences dimension of Dornyei & Otto’s (1998) theory can partly account for the phenomena that are demonstrated in the L2 classrooms in my investigation, give that it provides such a detailed analysis of key influences on L2 motivation in the different stages, and is one of the only dynamic models of the L2 motivational process. My investigation will consider whether there are differences between the key influences on the “preactional”, and “actional” stage, as is claimed by Dornyei & Otto’s (1998) theory, and also supported by empirical research (Dornyei, 1996; Dornyei & Kormos, 2000) (research-oriented). In addition, this theory may also have some practical utility which may be of relevance, as I attempt to refine, and improve my professional practice in L2 classrooms in this context, (action-oriented).

### **2.2.3 Deci & Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory**

This theory has been selected for use in my investigation for several key reasons. Firstly, it has much practical utility in that it places emphasis upon researching about not only the motives that regulate learners' study behavior, but also the contexts that promote or hinder these regulations. Given that my investigation will take place in a situation-specific context, it will be important to seek to understand what promotes or hinders the participants' regulations.

Secondly, this theory has strong links to the field of SLA, having been utilised in various L2-specific models. The focus in this type of L2 research has tended to be on developing intrinsic motivation, and learner autonomy in the L2 classroom, as mentioned in 2.1. However, it is important to note that many psychologists have recently been defining autonomy as a specific cultural value, rather than as a form of behavioural regulation, and thus criticise the idea as culture or gender bound (Iyengar & DeVoe, 2003). However, Ryan & Deci (2006) asserted that "autonomy is a salient issue across development, life domains, and cultures and is of central import for personality functioning and wellness (p. 1580).

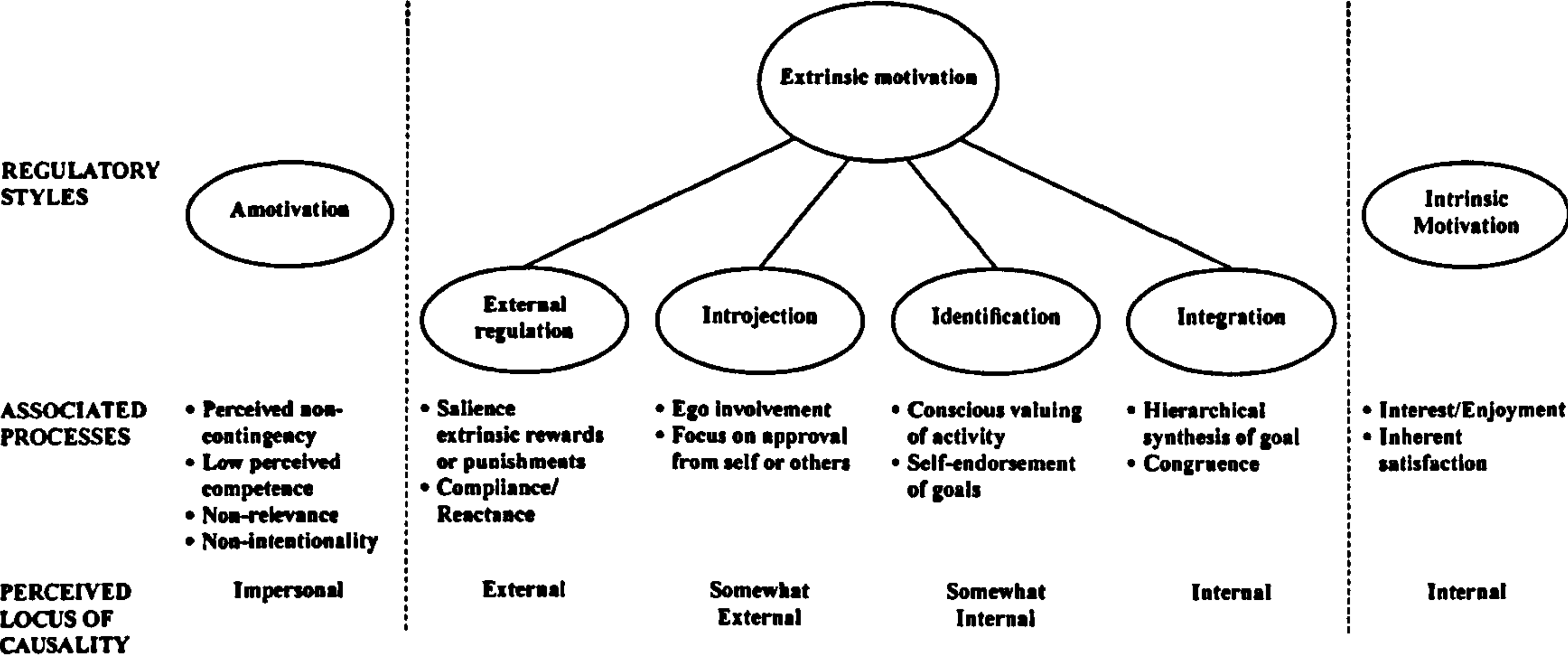
Thirdly, as mentioned in the introduction in 2.1, it has been utilised successfully in recent groundbreaking motivational intervention programmes. For example, Guthrie et al. (2007) introduced practices emphasising choice, which were based upon Ryan & Deci's (2002) view that students need to become autonomous learners who take control of their own learning.



Fourthly, this theory also has additional practical utility, in that it is linked to motivational interviewing, which has become widely adopted as a counseling style for facilitating behaviour change. In fact, Markland et al. (2005) stated that motivational interviewing, and self-determination theory are based upon the assumption that humans have an innate tendency for personal growth towards psychological integration, and that motivational interviewing provides the social-environmental facilitating factors suggested by self-determination theory to promote this tendency. Given my investigation's action-oriented aspect, motivational interviewing might have potential in facilitating language learning behaviour change in this context.

So, what is self-determination theory? It maintains that an understanding of human motivation requires a consideration of the innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. It postulated that motivation is not a unitary phenomenon, and just as individuals have different amounts of motivation, they may also have different orientations, (types), of motivation. *Figure 2.4* sets out Deci & Ryan's (1985) Taxonomy of Human Motivation.

*Figure 2.4 Deci & Ryan’s (1985) Taxonomy of Human Motivation*



These different types of motivation are based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to action. Over three decades of research has shown that the quality of experience, and performance can be very different, if one is behaving for intrinsic or extrinsic reasons. Intrinsic motivation is defined as the motivation to engage in activities for their own sake, in order to experience pleasure or satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation is defined as involving doing something because it leads to a separate outcome. Intrinsic motivation has been considered to be an important phenomenon for educators, since it is a “natural well-spring” of learning, and achievement, that can be systematically catalysed or undermined by parent and teacher practices (Ryan & Stiller, 1991). Vallerand (1997) posited the existence of three subtypes of intrinsic motivation: the intrinsic motivation to learn, to achieve, and to experience stimulation. Deci & Ryan (1985) presented cognitive evaluation theory to specify the factors in social contexts that produce variability in intrinsic motivation. It argued that interpersonal events, and structures, for example, rewards, communications, and feedback that conduce toward feelings of competence during action can enhance intrinsic motivation for that action, because they allow satisfaction

of the basic psychological need of competence. It also further specified that feelings of competence will not enhance intrinsic motivation, unless they are accompanied by a sense of autonomy, or in attributional terms, by an internal perceived locus of causality (IPLOC, de Charms, 1968). Clearly, the importance of intrinsic motivation for L2 teachers cannot be underestimated, most specifically, what factors, and forces engender, or undermine it. And, furthermore, the conditions that sustain it, or diminish it over time. As Deci & Ryan (2000) pointed out “there is considerable practical utility in focusing on task properties and their potential intrinsic interest, as it leads towards improved task design or selection to enhance motivation” (p. 57).

But, as teachers know only too well, although intrinsic motivation is clearly an important type of motivation, many of the activities individuals do in school, and/ or in L2 classrooms, are not intrinsically motivated, but sustained by extrinsic motivation. Self-determination theory (1985) proposed that extrinsic motivation can vary greatly in the degree to which it is autonomous. There are four types of extrinsic motivation, some of which do indeed represent less positive forms of motivation, and yet others that represent active, agentic states. These subtypes are: Firstly, external regulation. (This is the most heteronomous form). Such behaviours are performed to satisfy an external demand, or obtain an externally proposed reward contingency. For example, an L2 learner does their homework because they know if they do not do it, they will be punished, (for example, they will get a detention, or a bad grade etc). Individuals typically experience regulated behaviour as controlled or alienated, and their actions have an external perceived locus of causality (EPLOC, de Charms, 1968). Ryan & Connell (1989) found that the more students were externally regulated, the less they showed interest, value or effort, and the more they indicated a

tendency to blame others, such as the teacher, for negative outcomes. This is the most negative type of extrinsic motivation that was typically contrasted with intrinsic motivation in early studies. However, it is important to bear in mind that this is not the only type of extrinsic motivation.

Secondly, introjected regulation. This represents regulation by contingent self-esteem. This is also quite a controlling form, but only partially assimilating external controls, (for example, an L2 learner who studies English under duress, but does it in order to avoid guilt, and/ or anxiety, or to attain ego-enhancements, and/ or pride. A classic form of introjection is ego-involvement (Nicholls, 1984; Ryan, 1982).

Thirdly, regulation through identification. This is a more autonomous, or self-determined form. In this case, an individual has identified with the personal importance of a behavior, and has thus accepted its regulation as their own. For example, an L2 learner sees the importance of learning vocabulary in order to write good essays.

Finally, integrated regulation. This is the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation which occurs through self-examination, and bringing new regulations into congruence with one's other values, and needs. An L2 learner's identified regulation has been fully assimilated to their own self.

So how does extrinsically motivated behaviour become more self-determined? Internalisation, and integration are the processes that the behaviour has to go through, to do so. Even so, Deci & Ryan (1985) did not suggest that the continuum underlying



the types of extrinsic motivation is a development one per se, but self-reports of these types of motivation have been psychometrically shown to fall along an underlying continuum of relative autonomy (Ryan & Connell, 1989).

Given that as L2 teachers, we cannot always rely on intrinsic motivation to foster learning since many tasks that we want students to perform are neither inherently interesting nor enjoyable, we therefore need to understand more about the different types of extrinsic motivation, and what factors, and forces foster the more positive types. In fact, knowing how to promote more active, and volitional (versus passive, and controlling) forms of extrinsic motivation might become an essential strategy for successful L2 teaching. So therefore, L2 teachers, and/ or parents really need to understand the differences between leading students to internalise the responsibility, and sense of value for extrinsic goals, and alternatively how they can potentially foster the more typically “alienated” type of extrinsic motivation that is associated with low student persistence, interest, and involvement in L2 learners.

Early motivational research viewed intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation as dichotomous concepts (de Charms, 1968; Deci, 1971, 1975; Lepper, Greene & Nisbett, 1973). In fact, it even documented that external interventions such as rewards, evaluation, competition, and deadlines may undermine intrinsic motivation. Thus, in classic literature, extrinsic motivation was typically categorised as a pale, and impoverished, (even if powerful), form of motivation that contrasted with intrinsic motivation, (de Charms, 1968). But perhaps we, as educators, should focus on the relationship between intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation since perhaps classic literature took the competitive nature of this dichotomy too far. Several theorists have argued

that we have to consider how intrinsic, and extrinsic factors can be combined to optimise academic motivation (Alexander, 1997; Deci, 1992; Harackiewicz, Barron & Elliot, 1998; Hidi & Berndorff, 1998; Lepper & Henderlong, 2000; Rigby, Deci, Patrick & Ryan, 1992; Sansone & Morgan, 1992).

Intrinsic motivation has been operationally defined in various ways, although there have been two measures that have been most often used. Basic experimental research (Deci, 1971) has rested primarily on a behavioural measure of intrinsic motivation called the “free choice” measure. In experiments using this measure, participants are exposed to a task under varying conditions, for example, getting a reward or not. Then the researcher tells the participants not to work with the target task any more, and leaves them alone with it, and other distracting activities. This provides a period of “free-choice” in which the participants have to decide whether to return to the activity or not. As there is not an extrinsic reason to do the task, the more time they spend on the task will show they are intrinsically motivated for that task. This measure has been the mainstay through which the dynamics of intrinsic motivation have been experimentally studied. One other common approach is to use self-reports of interest, and enjoyment of the activity per se. Experimental studies typically rely upon task specific measures (Ryan 1982). Most field studies have instead used more general “domain” focused measures, such as one’s intrinsic motivation for school, (Hartner, 1981).

As can be seen in *Figure 2.4*, there is also a further form of motivation which Deci & Ryan (1985) defined as “amotivation”, the state of lacking an intention to act. When amotivated, an individual’s behaviour lacks intentionality, and a sense of

personal causation. Amotivation can result from not valuing an activity, not feeling competent to do something (Deci, 1975), or not believing it will yield a desired outcome (Seligman, 1975).

As mentioned previously, Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory has a strong link to L2 research because of the documented importance of intrinsic motivation in L2 classrooms, and additionally SDT's specific emphasis on autonomy which is also of relevance. After all, many contemporary language teaching methodologies make the assumption that taking an active, independent attitude to learning, (that is, becoming an autonomous learner), is beneficial to learning (Benson, 2000; Little, 1991; Wenden, 1991).

Noels, Clement & Pelletier (1999) conducted an investigation in which they considered how students' perceptions of their teachers' communicative style, particularly the extent to which teachers were perceived to support student autonomy, and provide useful feedback about students' learning progress, were related to students' intrinsic, and extrinsic motivational orientations. Correlational analyses determined that stronger feelings of intrinsic motivation were related to positive language learning outcomes, including greater motivational intensity, greater self-evaluations of competence, and a reduction in anxiety. Moreover, perceptions of the teachers' communicative style were related to intrinsic motivation, such that the more controlling, and the less informative students perceived the teachers to be, the lower the students' intrinsic motivation was.

To measure intrinsic/ extrinsic motivation in L2 research, Noels et al. (1999, 2000) set out to develop a new L2-specific instrument for assessing L2 learners' orientations from a self-determination perspective, (that is, a questionnaire that measures various types of intrinsic, and extrinsic orientations in L2 learning), and to relate the measures to: various antecedent, and consequence measures, (perceptions of competence, freedom of choice, anxiety, and the intention to continue L2 studies-all assessed by scales well established in educational psychology), to serve as criterion measures. And, also to relate the aforementioned obtained measures to Clement & Kruidenier's (1983) influential system of four types of orientations: instrumental, knowledge, travel, and friendship. The researchers found that instrumental orientation corresponded closely to external extrinsic regulation, whereas the other three orientations were associated with more self-determined, and intrinsic types of motive. Although this line of research is still inconclusive, because, for example, the important question of how integrative orientation relates to extrinsic/ intrinsic regulation is still to be answered), it has far-reaching potential in the study of L2 motivation. For example, language learning goals, (orientations), are a central issue in motivation research, but the great number of goals that L2 learners pursue has made it difficult to establish a theoretical framework for these. Applying this intrinsic/ extrinsic continuum, and the scale developed by Noels et al. (2000) could be helpful in going beyond a merely descriptive level, and organising goals systematically. In fact, this paradigm might be useful for analysing the classroom climate, and the L2 teachers, in terms of how controlling or autonomy supporting they are, and of course, this clearly has immediate practical implications. For the purposes of my investigation, I will not be conducting experiments about intrinsic, and/ or extrinsic motivation, (as mainstream psychology has done), or organising L2 learners goals



systematically, as described above, but seeking to understand whether examples of these types of motivational orientations are reported by the participants, and/ or observed in relation to their L2 learning behaviour in the classrooms. It will be of interest to note whether the participants are intrinsically, and/ or extrinsically motivated, and if extrinsically motivated, to identify if this is a more, or less self-determined form. This will provide a unique opportunity to investigate intrinsic, and/ or extrinsic motivation in an authentic learning environment, and also see how they might play out over time, hence providing a degree of ecological validity.

In sum, it will be of great interest to see to what extent these concepts can partly account for phenomena that will be demonstrated in my investigation. Given that I will be theorising from the standpoint of action, in order to act with understanding of the practical situation in L2 classrooms in this context, this theory could be of particular relevance, given its focus on not only the motives individuals have, but also what aspects of the L2 classroom facilitate or forestall them, by supporting or thwarting the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. (research-oriented). Aspects of this theory might help me refine, and improve my professional practice, (action-oriented).

#### **2.2.4 Bandura's (1986) Self-Efficacy Theory**

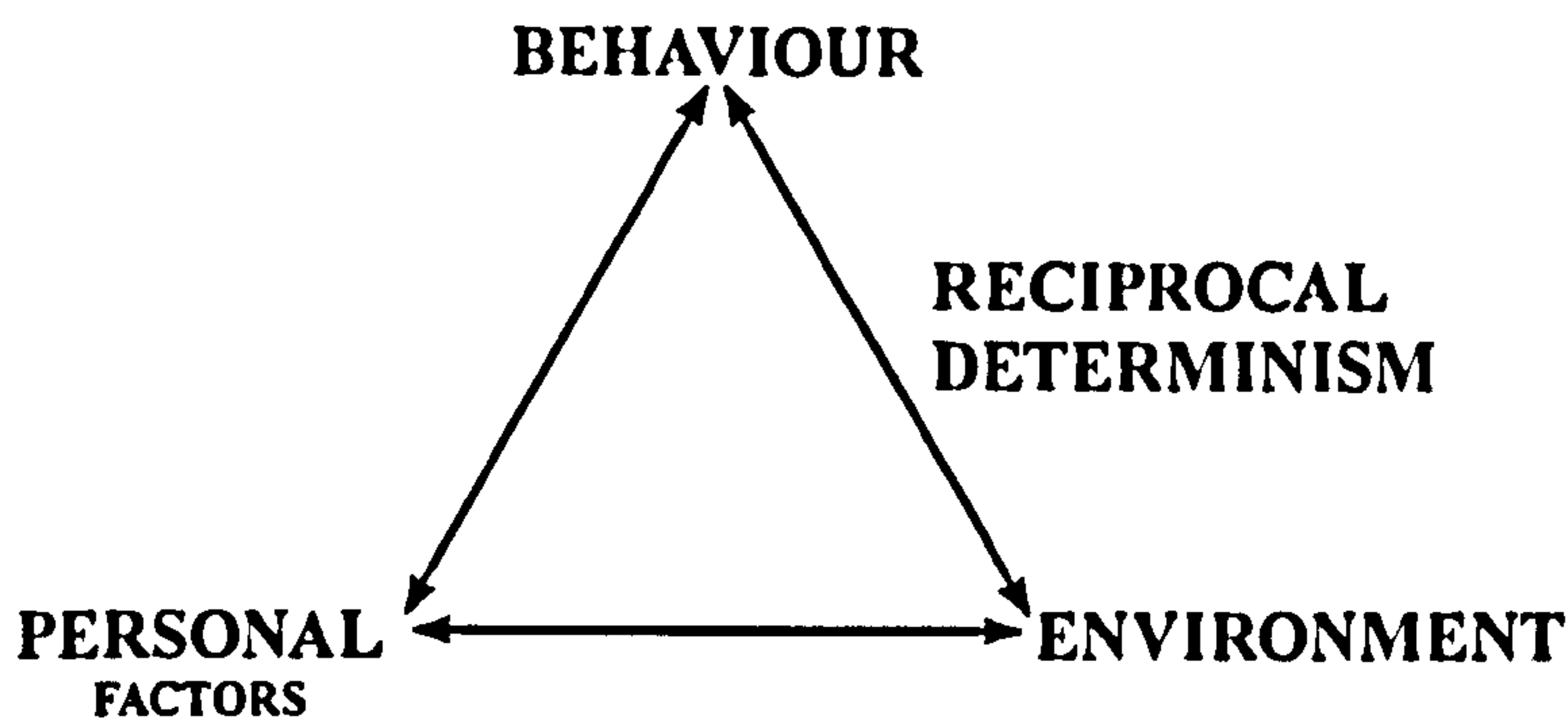
This theory has been selected for use in my investigation for two key reasons. Firstly, Bandura (1986) stated that judgments of self-efficacy are task, and domain specific, and therefore, it seems relevant to my investigation which focuses upon the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation, and thereby the classroom dynamics, which would no doubt include focus on the skills, tasks, and/ or activities.

Secondly, groundbreaking motivational intervention programmes cited by Wentzel & Wigfield (2007) had included practices focused on helping students be successful, and providing students with help when necessary (Guthrie et al., 2007; Balfanz et al., 2007) which were based on this theory.

The contribution made by the self-efficacy component of Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory to the study of self-regulation, and motivation in academic settings, cannot be underestimated. This social cognitive theory postulated that self-referent thought mediates between knowledge, and action, and through self-reflection, individuals evaluate their own experiences, and thought-processes. In fact, knowledge, skill, and prior attainments are often poor predictors, of subsequent attainments because the beliefs, that individuals hold about their abilities, and about the outcome of their efforts, powerfully influence the ways in which they will behave. In fact, how individuals interpret the results of their performance attainments informs, and alters their environments, and self-beliefs, which in turn inform, and alter their subsequent performances. This is the foundation of Bandura's (1977, 1986) conception of reciprocal determinism, the view that a) personal factors in the form of

cognition, affect, and biological events, b) behaviour, and c) environmental influences create interactions that result in triadic reciprocity, as set out in *Figure 2.5*.

*Figure 2.5 Model of the Relations between the Three Classes of Determinants in Bandura's (1986) Conception of Triadic Reciprocity*



Bandura (1977, 1997) formally defined perceived self-efficacy as, “personal judgements of one’s capabilities to organise and execute courses of action to attain designated goals” (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 83). He therefore sought to assess its level, generality, and strength across activities, and contexts. The level refers to its dependence on the difficulty of a particular task, the generality pertains to the transferability of self-efficacy beliefs across activities, from reading comprehension to writing, for example, and the strength is measured by the amount of one’s certainty about performing a given task. So, in contrast to trait measures of self-perceptions, self-efficacy indices focus on cognitive beliefs that are readily influenced by four types of experience: enactive attainment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and physiological states. Enactive experiences are the most influential source of efficacy belief because they are predicated on the outcomes of personal experiences, whereas vicarious influences depend on an observer’s self-comparison with, as well as, outcomes attained by a model. Verbal persuasion has a more limited impact, because outcomes are described, not directly witnessed, and thus depend upon the credibility

of the persuader. Finally, students base their self-efficacy judgments on their perceived physiological reactions, such as fatigue, stress, and other emotions. Unlike self-beliefs assumed to have trait-like stability across time, and setting, self-efficacy is assumed to be responsive to changes in personal context, and outcomes, whether experienced directly, vicariously, verbally, or physiologically.

In fact, in academic settings, self-efficacy research has investigated the relationships among efficacy beliefs, related psychological constructs, and academic motivation, and achievement. Self-efficacy has been prominent in studies that have explored its relationships with attributions (Schunk, 1981, 1983), goal setting (Locke & Latham, 1990; Wood & Locke, 1987), modeling (Schunk, 1981, 1987), problem solving (Bouffard-Bouchard, 1989; Larson, Piersel, Imao & Allen, 1990), reward contingencies (Schunk, 1983), strategy training (Schunk & Cox, 1986), teaching, and teacher education (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984), anxiety, and self-concept (Pajares & Miller, 1994), and varied academic performances (Bouffard & Vezeau, 1996).

Properties of self-efficacy judgements are measured using questionnaire items that are task specific, vary in difficulty, and capture degrees of confidence, (for example, from 0-100%). It is important to note that judgments of self-efficacy are task, and domain specific, so global or inappropriately defined self-efficacy assessments, weaken effects. In fact, self-efficacy beliefs should be assessed at the optimal level of specificity that corresponds to the criterial task being assessed, and the domain of functioning being analysed. As Pajares (1996) pointed out, this caution has gone unheeded in educational research, which has resulted in self-efficacy assessments that



reflect global or generalised attitudes about capabilities bearing slight or no resemblance to the criterial task to which they are being compared. For example, the broadest most general self-efficacy assessments consist of an omnibus type of instrument, that attempts to measure a general type of efficacy. Bandura (1986) argued that these create problems with predictive relevance, and are obscure about what is being assessed. Therefore, Bandura (1986) stressed that self-efficacy judgments should be tailored to the domain of functioning, and/ or task under investigation. It is of interest to note that these comments could perhaps equally be about the measuring instruments used by the Gardnerian social psychological tradition, discussed in 2.2.1, which also do not focus on the tasks related to L2 learning either, but take a global, and generalised approach to L2 motivation.

How could this theory, and related empirical research have practical utility in L2 classrooms? Bandura (1977) provided evidence that self-efficacious students participate more readily, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when they encounter difficulties, than do those who doubt their capabilities. In fact, in terms of choice of activities, self-efficacious students undertake difficult, and challenging tasks more readily than do inefficacious students. In addition, students' beliefs about their efficacy to manage academic task demands can also influence them emotionally by decreasing stress, anxiety, and depression (Bandura, 1997). Pajares (1996) added that efficacy beliefs help determine how much effort individuals will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronting obstacles, and how resilient they will prove in the face of adverse situations-the higher the sense of efficacy, the greater the effort, persistence, and resilience. And in fact, efficacy beliefs also influence individuals' thought-patterns,

and emotional reactions. Self-efficacy beliefs also provide students with a sense of agency to motivate their learning, through use of such self-regulatory processes as goal-setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and strategy use. In addition, there is evidence that the more capable students judge themselves to be, the more challenging goals they embrace (Zimmermann, Bandura & Martinez-Pons, 1992). For the purposes of my investigation, I will not be measuring the L2 learners' self-efficacy in the previously described ways, but seeking to understand in what ways self-efficacy beliefs affect the learners in the L2 classrooms.

However, it must be noted that self-efficacy beliefs differ conceptually, and psychometrically from closely-related constructs, such as outcome expectations, self-concepts, and perceived control, which are beyond the scope of my investigation. In fact, Bandura (1986) stated that although self-efficacy and outcome expectations were both hypothesised to affect motivation, he suggested that self-efficacy, would play a larger role because "the types of outcomes people anticipate depend largely on their judgments of how well they are going to perform in a given situation" (p. 392).

In sum, students' self-perceptions of efficacy are distinctive from related motivational constructs because of their specificity, and close correspondence to performance tasks. These cognitive beliefs differ conceptually, and psychometrically from trait self-belief measures, due to their sensitivity to variations in experience, tasks, and situational context. As such, it will be of great interest to see to what extent this theory can partly account for the phenomena demonstrated in the L2 classrooms, given its sensitivity to variations in experience, tasks, and context, (research-oriented).

In addition, aspects of this way of understanding motivation could potentially be used to refine, and improve my professional practice in this context. (action-oriented).

### 2.2.5 Interest

Why has interest been selected for use in my investigation? This area of research seems to have rich potential for supporting educational intervention, given that interested activity apparently has a biological foundation in all mammals (Panksepp, 1998, 2000). And, as Lipstein & Renniger (2006) pointed out, teachers might not recognise the significant contribution they could make to the development of students' academic interest. In fact, Lipstein & Renniger (2006) also stated that teachers often think that students either have, or do not have interest. As such, there could be parallels with what teachers often think about student motivation. Interest therefore could be utilised to help me theorise from the standpoint of action, in order to act with understanding of the practical situation in L2 classrooms in this context.

It has been shown that the level of an individual's interest has repeatedly been found to be a powerful influence on learning. For example, interest has been shown to influence attention (Ainley, Hidi & Berndorff, 2002; Hidi, 1995; Hidi, Renniger & Krapp, 2004). And, goals (Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, Carter & Elliot, 2000; Harackiewicz & Durik, 2003). As well as, levels of learning (Alexander, 1997; Alexander & Murphy, 1998; Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer & Elliot, 2002; Hoffmann, 2002).

In terms of conceptualisations, interest as a motivational variable refers to the psychological state of engaging, or the predisposition to reengage with particular classes of objects, events or ideas over time. Here, these are termed content. There are at least three ways in which interest can be distinguished from other motivational



variables. Firstly, interest includes both affective, and cognitive components as separate, but interacting systems (Hidi & Berndorff, 1998; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Hidi et al., 2004). This is a position supported by neuroscientific research (LeDoux, 2000). Secondly, both the affective, and cognitive components of interest have biological roots (Hidi, 2003). Thirdly, interest is the outcome of an interaction between a person, and a particular content (Hidi & Baird, 1986; Krapp, 2000). The potential for interest is in the person, but the content, and the environment define the direction of interest, and contribute to its development. Thus, other individuals, the organisation of the environment, and a person's own efforts, such as self-regulation, can support interest development (Renniger, 2000; Renniger & Hidi, 2002; Renniger et al., 2004). Given my investigation's focus on the situation-specific context, it will be important to analyse to what extent interest is within an L2 learner, as well as how the L2 content, and the L2 classroom environment define the direction of their interest.

Therefore, two types of interest have been the primary focus of educational research to date: situational interest, and individual interest. The former refers to focused attention, and the affective reaction that is triggered in the moment by environmental stimuli, which may, or may not, last over time (Hidi, 1990; Hidi & Baird, 1986). The latter refers to an individual's relatively enduring predisposition to reengage particular content over time, as well as to the immediate psychological state when this predisposition has been activated (Krapp & Fink, 1992; Renniger, 2000). Both types of interest have been described as consisting of two phases. In the former, there is a first phase in which interest is triggered, and a subsequent phase in which interest is maintained (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). In fact, Mitchell (1993) proposed

that the essence of triggering interest lies in finding various ways to stimulate individuals, (“catching” interest), and that the key to maintaining interest, lies in finding ways to empower students, by helping them find meaning or personal relevance, (“holding” interest). In the latter, the two phases included an emerging individual interest, and well-developed individual interest (Renniger, 2000). Even so, although individual, and situational interest are distinct, they are not dichotomous phenomena, but rather can be expected to interact, and influence each other’s development (Alexander, 1997; Alexander, Jetton & Kulikowitch, 1995; Hidi, 1990; Hidi & Anderson, 1992).

Recently, Hidi & Renniger (2006) introduced a four-phase model of interest development, which builds on, and extends empirical studies of interest, and learning, for example, the three-phase model of interest, on which they collaborated with Krapp (2002). Therefore, this four-phase model of interest development described the development, and deepening of learner interest in this order: triggered situational interest, maintained situational interest, emerging, (less-well developed), individual interest, and well-developed individual interest.

In more detail, once the first phase of triggered situational interest has been elicited, it can last for short or long periods of time, and may provide a basis for an individual to begin forming a connection to content. In the second phase of maintained situational interest, an individual is typically supported by the environment, for example, by others, tasks etc, and this continues to develop a basis for connecting to content, and to find ways to relate this information to other available information. As interest is sustained in this phase, an individual is also developing

value for content. In the third phase, an individual begins to seek repeated engagement with content, continues to do this, with or without explicit external supports, and consolidates related knowledge. Finally, in the fourth phase, an individual continues to seek repeated opportunities for engagement. Curiosity questions, self-regulation, valuing, and the ability to attenuate frustration, and sustain creative thinking, inform this re-engagement. Each phase of interest is characterised by varying amounts of affect, knowledge, and value. The four phases are considered to be sequential, and distinct, and represent a form of cumulative, progressive development, in cases where interest is supported, and maintained, either through the efforts of others, or because of the challenges or opportunity, that a person sees in a task. However, it is important to note that only a few studies have been conducted that have addressed the development of interest over time (Krapp & Lewalter, 2001; Renniger & Leckrone, 1991). That is why my investigation must seek to understand more about this key issue, in order to theorise from the standpoint of action, in order to act with understanding of the practical situation in my context.

According to Renniger (1998) interest research has been handicapped by the wide gaps among researchers' approaches to the study of interest, and interpretation of findings. A central problematic issue has related to the measurement of interest. Some researchers have measured interest in terms of liking (Deci, 1998; Koeller et al., 2001). However, others have operationalised their studies in terms of value, and feelings of valences (Krapp, 2000, 2002). Yet, some others have identified interest in terms of positive feelings, stored knowledge, value, and repeated engagement (Renniger et al., 2002). These different approaches to measuring interest have been based upon differing conceptualisations. Although a number of researchers have



distinguished between interest, and knowledge, in Hidi & Renniger's (2006) conceptualisation, affect, and value are not independent of knowledge. For the purposes of my investigation, I will ask the participants to self-report on how they are motivated, (in their own words), over the course of a learning period, as well as observe them as they engage in the happenings, and events in the L2 classrooms, in order to understand more about interest in the situation-specific context.

In terms of practical utility, these two types of interest may be relevant to educators. Firstly, situational interest has been shown to play a particularly important role in learning, especially when students do not have pre-existing individual interest in academic activities, content areas or topics (Hidi, 1990; Hidi & Anderson, 1992; Hidi & Berndorff, 1998). By focusing on the enhancement of situational interest in classrooms, educators can find ways to foster students' involvement in specific content areas, and increase levels of academic motivation (Bergin, 1999; Hoffmann & Hausler, 1998; Lepper, 1985; Mitchell, 1993).

And therefore, what aspects of the learning environment trigger situational interest? Research has shown that modification of teaching materials, and strategies, and/ or how tasks are presented, can contribute to the development of situational interest in a variety of areas (Hidi & Berndorff, 1998; Lepper & Cordova, 1992; Lepper & Henderlong, 2000). In addition, it can also be sparked by environmental or text features, such as incongruous, surprising information, character identification or personal relevance, and intensity (Renniger & Hidi, 2002). But one caveat is that different types of learners may respond in different ways. For example, recent research by Durik & Harackiewicz (2007) illustrated how learners with low individual



interest, and learners with high individual interest responded in different ways to the collative features of materials, (how materials are presented in print). The formers' interest was fostered by the collative features of the learning materials, which were intended to attract attention to the task, but not engage them at a deep level. The latters' interest was promoted by materials that emphasised the personal utility of the task. Other research also supported introducing educational materials in more meaningful contexts that illustrate the utility of learning, or make it more personally relevant (Chabay & Sherwood, 1992; Cordova & Lepper, 1996; Mitchell, 1993; Parker & Lepper, 1992; Ross, 1983). Giving students choices, even when seemingly trivial, and instructionally irrelevant, seemed to enhance interest (Cordova & Lepper, 1996). During the early phases of interest development, it is crucial that educators make students feel positive about their emerging abilities to work with content. Positive feelings for content may be facilitated by offering choice in tasks (Flowerday & Schraw, 2003) and promoting a sense of autonomy (Deci, 1992).

In addition, aspects of the learning environment which facilitate the maintenance of situational interest will clearly be key in my L2 context because mastering an L2 requires ongoing effort over an extended time-frame. Meaningfulness of tasks, and/ or personal involvement seemed to help (Harackiewicz et al., 2002). In fact, situational interest has been shown to positively influence cognitive performance in work with computers (Azevedo, 2004). Furthermore, extrinsic rewards may be especially important when individuals have no initial interest in the tasks (Zimmerman, 1985). Empirical evidence has also shown that more autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation can be associated with greater engagement (Connell & Wellborn, 1991), better performance (Miserandino, 1996), less dropping-out (Vallerand & Bissonnette,

1992), higher quality learning (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987) and greater psychological well-being (Sheldon & Kasser, 1995) among other outcomes. But to fully internalise a regulation, and thus to become autonomous with respect to it, people must inwardly grasp its meaning and worth. It is these meanings that become internalised, and integrated in environments that provide support for the needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Thus, tangible extrinsic rewards might not always be a bad thing (Hidi, 2000).

Secondly, individual interest is also an important determinant of academic motivation, and learning (Schiefele, Krapp & Winteler, 1992). In fact, investigations focusing on individual interest have shown that children, as well as adults, who are interested in particular activities or topics, pay closer attention, persist for longer periods of time, learn more, and enjoy their involvement to a greater degree than individuals without interest (Ainley, 1994, 1998; Prenzel, 1988; Renniger, 1987, 1990, 1998; Schiefele, 1991, 1996). The level of an individual's interest has also been found to have a powerful impact on attention, recognition, and recall (Renniger & Wozniak, 1985), persistence and effort (Krapp & Lewalter, 2001), academic motivation (Harackiewicz & Durik, 2003), levels of learning (Renniger et al., 2002) as well as goals (Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, Carter & Elliot, 2000; Harackiewicz & Durik, 2003; Pintrich & Zusho, 2002).

Recent research has shown that a well-developed individual interest may result in a student generating, and seeking answers to a curiosity question (Lipstein & Renniger, 2006), or allow an individual to produce effort that feels effortless (Renniger & Hidi, 2002), or enable a person to sustain long-term constructive, and creative endeavours.

And in fact, instructional conditions or the learning environment can facilitate the development, and deepening of well-developed individual interest by providing opportunities that include interaction, and challenge that lead to knowledge building (Renniger & Hidi, 2002).

In sum, it will be of great research interest to analyse, and evaluate the extent to which this way of understanding interest will be able to partly account for the phenomena demonstrated in my investigation. It will be of research interest to see whether interest develops in a cumulative way. Understanding more about how to distinguish between factors that trigger situational interest, and those that prompt maintenance of situational interest, as well as what factors prompt emerging, and well-developed individual interest might help me refine, and improve my professional practice, (action-oriented).

### 2.3 Understanding Motivation: Key Influences

As mentioned previously, my investigation will not only focus on the general motivation to learn English, but also on what happens in the situation-specific context, for in some ways the dominant research traditions have downplayed the classroom dynamics, and focused more on learners' cognitions. After all, as Ushioda (1996) pointed out, within the context of institutionalised learning, the common experience would seem to be motivational flux, not stability. Therefore, what factors keep L2 learning "going" are of fundamental importance in motivational terms, since mastering an L2 involves ongoing effort over an extended time-frame. So, (as stated at the outset in 1.1), I will be particularly interested in these factors that affect the motivational quality of the learning experience. To compound matters further, the general motivation in an L2 classroom could even be indirectly affected by the happenings, and events in other subjects, too. These influences, however, are beyond the scope of my particular investigation.

So, what key influences on motivation, and/ or L2 motivation have been documented in empirical research conducted by others? After all, these influences in the situation-specific context may be the "building blocks" of L2 motivation. Although my investigation is about L2 motivation, I will also draw upon empirical research about key influences on motivation, if appropriate. I have divided these influences into three broad, and general themes, for ease of reading.

Firstly, individuals' own unique set of beliefs, and values about English, and themselves as language learners, will affect their L2 motivation.



Empirical research has shown that how the L2 learner “values” the language will be a key influence. Ryan (2000) described this aspect of motivation as the “Do I want to do it?” aspect (p. 102). As Norton Pierce (1995) pointed out, if learners “invest” in a L2, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic, (language, education, and friendship), or material, (capital goods, real estate, and money), resources which will in turn increase the value of their “cultural capital”. Chen & Stevenson (1995) suggested that there are three particularly relevant “values” to academic achievement: the value placed upon education, cultural beliefs about education, and social support from family, and peers. These values may well be externally generated, but will then perhaps become internalised by the individual.

How they value the language could also be closely linked to their goals. Any number of personal, and social language learning goals may be operative in guiding how the L2 learners invest their time, talent, and energy in L2 learning. But, do young learners actually have any clearly defined goals? This question is particularly pertinent in my investigation since the participants are in an institutionalised learning environment, and have no other choice but to learn through the medium of English. Ushioda (1998) in her longitudinal interview study with motivated Irish learners of French, suggested that her participants’ future goal-orientation was “more appropriately conceived as a potentially evolving dimension of language learning motivation, rather than its necessary rationale” (p. 182). After all, as Brophy (1998) pointed out, school attendance is compulsory, and the content of the curriculum is always selected on the basis of what society wants, rather than what the learners themselves want. In short, young people in any institutionalised context have to, (to a certain extent), accept the goals of the classroom activities, which will be largely

dictated by the requirements of the course, and in my investigation, by IBO course directives. Therefore, they may not really determine their own goals. Pintrich & Schunk (1996) postulated that there is little pre-decisional activity, (when the individual is involved in decision-making, and goal setting), on the part of students. Hufton et al. (2002) argued that whilst students may not have any choice about studying a subject, they still determine whether they want to commit themselves to this activity. However, that still stops short of being a clearly defined, and proactive goal.

The broader context may also provide strong influences that will impact upon how an individual values English, and subsequently affect their L2 motivation. Studies of immigrant women, and families have emphasised the socio-political constraints that work against language, and literacy development (Menard Warwick, 2005). Individuals could be influenced by factors such as a country's immigration policies, an economic downturn, the availability of bilingual education for children, the gendered practices of immigrant communities, and the economic opportunities available to newcomers at that particular moment in history. Studying Portuguese immigrants in a Toronto factory (Goldstein, 1997 in Menard-Warwick, 2005) found that few women had opportunities, ("action possibilities"), to acquire English, regardless of how strong their general motivation was, because of their context. As Menard-Warwick (2005) pointed out, even if socio-political constraints on learning arise from external, historical circumstances, such constraints often live on in educational contexts. It may be ironic that these L2 learners, in this context, who are reasonably wealthy in their countries of origin, and have chosen to move to another country, (that is, not been forced, like immigrants), may still have parallels with

immigrants, in that, they may still find it hard to fit into the new culture, and in this case, the learning style of the new school.

In addition, setting specific socio-cultural values may mediate achievement, cognition, and behaviour. These can be defined as normative beliefs about what is right, and wrong in thought, and action, and shared by most members of a given cultural or social group (Phalet & Lens, 1995). Clearly, how the participants value English will be influenced by cultural norms, and societal expectations and attitudes, to a certain extent. But, this notion of “cultural or social groups” may be becoming increasingly outdated. For example, Backman (2004) explored definitions of Malaysian identity. There are Chinese in Malaysia who have migrant backgrounds, but so too do many Malays (Backman, 2004, p. 112). And in fact, Chinese can be split into dialect, and sub-dialect groups, for example, Hakka, Hokien, Teochiu. Could all these sub-groups be categorised in one neat group, that is, Malaysian? And in fact, in many learning environments nowadays, as is the case in my investigation, the L2 learners will not form a homogeneous group, but consist of various ethnolinguistic groups. With this mix of nationalities, identities shaped firmly in one context may become reshaped in another (Rizvi, 2000). In such international contexts, a central factor also to consider will be the interplay of the students’ diverse language identities, and how this interaction may become another key influence.

In addition, what the L2 learners regards themselves as being capable of achieving with regards to English may also be a key influence on L2 motivation. This links the above described “Do I want to do it?” aspect of motivation with the “Can I do it?” aspect. This could be related to their attributions, self-efficacy beliefs, and



expectancy beliefs. In this investigation, the focus will be on their self-efficacy beliefs. In fact, their sense of competence may be a powerful internal influence on whether or not they will “invest” themselves in the L2.

Therefore, the position the L2 learner takes on the “ability versus effort” motivational debate may be another key influence on L2 motivation. Research has suggested that those from “Western” cultures may be more influenced by notions of fixed intelligence, and relatively stable levels of ability, in contrast to those from “Asian” cultures who emphasise effort, which is underpinned by Confucian-style beliefs (Stevenson & Lee, 1990; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). Steinberg’s (1996) series of studies of high school students also demonstrated that children from Asian families were found to have a more desirable attributional style, (that is, one emphasising effort over ability), than their black, Latino or white peers. However, there is a growing body of conflicting evidence about this seemingly clear-cut debate. In fact, many researchers in the UK have now provided evidence that effort is now considered more important than fixed ability, in UK schools, too. In Blatchford’s (1996) study, his respondents rarely appeared to offer ability as a factor influencing their own performance. In addition, Lightbody et al.’s (1996) study of children in one London secondary school indicated a greater occurrence of effort, rather than ability attributions. Gipps & Tunstall (1998) provided “short stories” about classroom performance to 46 six, and seven year olds. Effort was the most commonly cited reason provided by the children when asked to give reasons for success or failure in these vignettes. Competence in the specific domain was of secondary importance.



Recent research by Dweck (2006) has also shown that what students believe about their ability, that is, whether they see it as something that's fixed, (a "fixed" mindset), or something that can grow, and change, (a "growth" mindset), has profound effects on their motivation, learning, and school achievement. Those with the former mindset, care about appearing "smart", and those with the latter, are interested in learning (Cimpian et al., 2007). Those with the "fixed" mindset believed that if they worked hard, it meant they did not have the ability, and in fact, things would just come naturally to them if they did. Those with the "growth" mindset believed that the more effort they made, the more they would improve.

However, everyone will not interpret "effort", and "ability" in exactly the same way, regardless of ethnicity or culture. Effort is yet another complicated, qualitative construct. In one context, what seems a lot, may in fact be very little in another, as demonstrated by Hufton et al. (2002) in their comparisons of students' levels of motivation in three different locations: St. Petersburg, Russia, Kentucky, USA, and Sunderland, UK. The students in Russia seemed to be putting in the most effort, but did not perceive themselves to be putting in a lot of effort because of the high academic standards in their context. The students in Kentucky, US, were putting in the least amount of effort, but perceived themselves to be studying very hard, again because of their context. This research may illustrate just quite how qualitative the concept of effort might be.

The "effort versus ability" debate is clearly a key issue to consider in my investigation given that individuals who attribute academic failure to ability rather than effort, are perhaps going to be less likely to persist when confronted with

challenging learning situations, and may subsequently develop a “maladaptive” motivational orientation. Will these predominantly Asian participants in my investigation have the same beliefs about effort as other Asian learners, in different countries? And also, to what extent will these participants’ sense of competence, self-efficacy beliefs, and the type of “mindset” they have, affect their L2 motivation?

This “Do I want to do it?” aspect could also be influenced by an individual’s intrinsic motivation, and even their individual interest in the L2, since they seem to be closely related, not forgetting situational interest set out under the third theme in this section. How intrinsically motivated will the participants be? What will be the nature of its relationship with extrinsic motivation in this particular context, as discussed in 2.2.3. Empirical research about individual interest is already set out in 2.2.5.

Secondly, the quality of interaction with significant others, for example, parents, teachers, and peers will affect L2 motivation.

With regards to parents, Eccles et al. (1998) suggested that there are four parenting factors which have been traditionally identified as significantly shaping student motivation. They are: providing developmentally appropriate timing of achievement demands/ pressure, having high confidence in the child’s abilities, providing a supportive affective family climate, and providing highly-motivated role models. Gardner (1985) in his social psychological theory identified two main dimensions of the role of parents in their children’s learning process: a “passive” role, (this involved giving encouragement, support, and monitoring), and an “active” role, (this involved direct modeling, and communicating attitudes to L2 learning). What is of interest is

that when these two roles are not in harmony, the “passive” role becomes more influential. That means that even educationally appropriate support practices can be overruled by latent negative attitudes of the parents towards the target language. In fact, Steinberg’s (1996) extensive longitudinal motivational study of over 20,000 high school students starkly documented the effects of parental disengagement on general student performance. Disengaged parents seemed to lead to students who accepted poor grades, scorned academic excellence, and spent a large amount of time socialising, and engaging in leisure pursuits, and/ or part-time employment. In fact, it is not only parents, but also other family members, who can greatly influence student motivation. For example, a student may even be influenced negatively by the views of a sibling “My brothers told me it would be boring” (Chambers, 1999, p. 15). But Menard-Warwick (2005) captured the complexity of potential influences interacting with each other by asking “How have family perspectives on education interacted with the larger socio-political context to shape L2 learning opportunities?” (p. 167).

And of course, the powerful influence of the teacher, in both positive, and negative ways, must not be overlooked. Clark & Trafford (1995) found that teachers and students, both regard the teacher-pupil relationship as the most significant variable affecting pupils’ attitudes to L2 learning. It is quite surprising then that with regards to L2 motivational research, teachers have been a rather overlooked, under-researched influence. When they are researched, it can be in the form of a very one-dimensional, static, and global appraisal. For example, questions will be set out around four clusters in a global way: general evaluation, rapport, competence, and inspiration. The semantic differential format will be utilised, with two bipolar adjectives used to

evaluate the teacher, for example, boring-interesting etc. This approach may not get anywhere near to capturing the sheer depth or magnitude of the influence of the teacher on L2 motivation.

In fact, learners will be influenced by how the L2 teacher actively socialises them in the L2 classroom, and supports motivation through effective modelling, task presentations, and the extent to which they utilise feed-back, and/ or the reward-system effectively. Therefore, perhaps, it is the indirect, yet powerful influence of the teacher on the micro-context, which should be at the core of the focus of any investigation about motivation, since all aspects of how the L2 classroom is managed are largely within the control of the L2 teacher. (The teacher will also be discussed further in relation to course-specific aspects, under the third theme).

With regards to peers, the Social Networks Research Group from the Portland State University, US, through the Beaverton Project (2000-2001), documented a direct influence of children's naturally existing peer groups on their general motivation, and performance in school. Clearly, the effects of the group atmosphere, and general interaction between group members could be a key L2 motivational influence, too. In fact, in an L2 classroom investigation, Clement et al. (1994) found that perceived group cohesiveness substantially contributed to the learners' overall motivation construct. On the other hand, Chambers (1999) provided evidence that a key influence on L2 demotivation may be that the group is "too big" etc. The nature of interaction with others is clearly key.



Thirdly, the immediate instructional context, (the L2 classroom), will affect L2 motivation.

Empirical research has documented that course-specific aspects, (also directly related to the L2 teacher, and within their control), seem to be some of the most significant influences on L2 motivation. Nikolov (1999) provided evidence that the most significant motivational factor for all age groups between six, and fourteen was situation-specific, (attitudes towards the learning context, the teacher, the tasks, and the chosen material). Oxford (1998) also stated that "course specific" aspects mentioned by students are an important focus if we want students to be motivated to learn.

With regards to student demotivation, Ushioda (1998) in a qualitative study of effective motivational thinking of 20 Irish learners of French found without exception, that it was related to negative aspects of the institutionalised learning context, such as particular teaching methods, and learning tasks. Furthermore, Oxford (1998) suggested that there are four broad, and general themes related to student demotivation. The fourth theme was the "nature of classroom activities", whilst the other three themes were related to the teacher. However, two of Oxford's themes related to the teacher, "the teacher's attitude to the course or the material", and "style conflicts between teachers, and students" could be considered to be largely skill, task, and/ or activity related. Dornyei (1998) provided evidence that there were nine key influences on student demotivation. The largest category, (40% frequency of occurrences), concerned the teacher, (their personality, commitment to teaching, attention paid to students, competence, teaching method, style, rapport with students).

But, an additional significant finding was that a further 15% of the occurrences also concerned the teacher, although indirectly, through the learner's reduced self-confidence that was partly due to some classroom event that was ultimately within the teacher's control. Chambers (1999) also provided empirical evidence about the ways in which the teacher taught could be a key influence on student demotivation. This was caused by them going "on and on", without realising they have lost everybody, not giving clear instructions, using inferior equipment, (for listening tasks), criticising students, shouting at students who did not understand, and using old-fashioned teaching materials.

In sum, given the focus in my investigation on the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation, it is imperative that I seek to understand the key positive, and negative influences on it, from the perspective of teenagers. After all, these might be the "building blocks" of L2 motivation.

## **2.4 Conclusions**

It is hoped that these various, and eclectic theories, and related empirical research will provide strong underlying foundations on which to build my investigation, as I look at L2 motivation through a “different window” from the dominant paradigms. I will be considering which theories help me make the most sense of the phenomena displayed in the L2 classrooms in this context, as I theorise from the standpoint of action, to act with understanding of the practical situation. After all, the value of any theoretical model for the purposes of my investigation must lie in its degree of usefulness in interpreting classroom events, (research-oriented), as well as its practical utility value, in terms of teaching, (action-oriented).

## **Chapter 3 The Research Design**

### **3.1 The Rationale for my use of Action Research**

My investigation set out to approach L2 motivation from a rather different angle from traditional L2 research. Utilising a form of action research, I explored how motivation played out over time in two L2 classrooms, from the perspective of teenagers, (research-oriented), with a view to using this understanding, to refine, and improve my professional practice, (action-oriented). In sum, I theorised from the standpoint of action, in order to act with understanding of my practical situation in the L2 classrooms in this context.

Conceptualisations of action research can vary greatly. It is therefore very important, at the outset, to provide some background about the different forms of action research, before explaining clearly what form was utilised in my investigation, and its rationale.

It was the social psychologist, Kurt Lewin, who coined the term “action research” in the 1930s. Lewin defined action research as “research leading to social action” (1946, p. 38). Action research may represent a distinct view of the nature, and development of professional knowledge, which stands in some contrast with the idea of educational theory as applied social science, that is, as a body of ideas that can be developed, and gain validation independently of practice, that subsequently can be “handed down” to teachers to be implemented. As Carr & Kemmis (1986) pointed out “.....the testing ground for educational research is not its theoretical sophistication



or its ability to conform to criteria derived from social sciences, but its capacity to resolve educational problems, and improve professional practice” (p. 109). Action research therefore starts with practical questions. Recently, action research has begun to be “fashionably” termed “practitioner” research (Bartlett & Burton, 2006, p. 398).

Some action researchers make a distinction between “practical”, and “participatory” action research. “Practical” action research is defined as teachers seeking to research problems in their own classrooms so that they can improve their students’ learning, and their own professional performance, as my investigation set out to do. “Participatory” action research has a social, and community orientation, and an emphasis on research that contributes to emancipation, or change in our society. This is often referred to by different, but compatible names, for example, “community-based enquiry” (Stringer, 1999, p. 9), “collaborative action research” or “critical” action research (Mills, 2000, p. 7).

Lewin (1951) described action research as a “spiralling” cyclical process that included planning, execution, and reconnaissance. Mills (2000) described his model as the “dialectical action research spiral”. Stringer (1999) described an Action Research Interactive Spiral that starts with “looking”, in order to build up a picture of “understanding, clarity, and insight”. This is then followed by “thinking” about the data, and subsequently “acting”. Sagor (2000) described a seven-step process that included selecting a focus, clarifying theories, identifying research questions, collecting data, analysing data, reporting results, and taking informed action.

However, since many action research investigations are very specific, and related to a somewhat “narrow” aspect of classroom practice, individuals sometimes assume that action research is a very “utilitarian”, almost “technical” type of research, used for solving very specific classroom problems. In fact, action research can also be “open-ended”, with a general, and broad focus. For example, one of Elliott’s (who co-founded the Centre for Applied Research in Education at the University of East Anglia, with Lawrence Stenhouse) early projects involved trying to “engage” the “disengaged”. In addition, it is also often thought that action research lacks any theoretical or philosophical perspective, and as such, has a “disarming philosophical innocence” (Bridges, 2004, p. 183). After all, one could question whether a practical issue dealt with in the classroom really requires any great philosophical baggage as a condition for understanding. But Bridges (2004) argued for the centrality of philosophy, and indeed philosophising, in action research, and offered a distinction between the philosophy “of” action research, and philosophy “in” action research. The former refers to ideas rooted in epistemology, ethics, and social philosophy which might underlie the idea, and practice of action research. The latter refers to the ways in which action researchers could engage more self-consciously with philosophical questions. Elliott (2003) also criticised action research which “ignores the understanding aspect, and focuses solely on the practical aspect” (p. 173). That was why I built my investigation upon strong theoretical underpinnings, and did not ignore the “understanding” aspect.

The benefits of teachers conducting action research have been widely documented. Zeichner (2003) suggested that teacher research often has a profound effect on those who have done it, and in some cases this can transform classrooms, and schools.

Bartlett & Burton (2006) stated that discussions in their action research group have shown the potential of teacher research for developing the professional knowledge, and understanding of those involved. Teacher research often helps teachers become more flexible, and open to new ideas (Oja & Smulyan, 1989). It enables them to become more proactive, and self-directed in relation to external authority (Holly, 1990). It boosts their self-esteem, and confidence levels (Dadds, 1995). It helps them develop an attitude, and skills of self-analysis that are applied in other aspects of their teaching (Day, 1984). It changes patterns of communication among them leading to a more collegial interaction (Selener, 1997). It helps them become more aware of their impact on students (Allen et al., 1995). It also alters teacher talk from a focus on students' problems to an emphasis on student resources, and accomplishments (Atwell, 1987). However, many of these references to the value of teacher research are anecdotal in nature, and are not the result of systemic, and intentional exploration of teachers' experiences (Huberman, 1996).

One study in which the professional development process associated with teacher research has been systematically studied was the Madison Wisconsin Classroom Action Research Programme. Zeichner (1997) conducted a two-year study on the nature, and impact of this programme, and confirmed that many teachers experienced benefits from doing action research. For example, it helped them develop more confidence in their ability as teachers to influence the circumstances in which they taught. It enabled them to look at their teaching in a more focused, and in-depth way, a habit they had not internalised, and made use of prior to participating in the programme. It made them talk more with their colleagues about their teaching, and therefore made them more "collaborative". It enabled them to become more "learner-

centred” in their practice, as a result of conducting the research. Many teachers claimed they were much more convinced of the importance of talking to students, and listening carefully to them, and that they now actually did this.

However, there has been much criticism of action research over the years. For example, action research has been regarded as nothing more than mere “descriptions of practice” rather than objectively designed research studies (Bartlett & Burton, 2006, p. 396). But what will distinguish these mere “descriptions” as research, is the critical questioning, and appraisal that the teacher researcher, and their community of practice brings to bear upon them. And even though it is not usually possible to generalise from action research investigations, because of the small sample sizes, and their “uniqueness”, the strength of action research will hopefully lie in its “relatedness”, that is, the possibility of being able to relate the findings to other educational contexts.

Against this backdrop, what form of action research was utilised in my investigation, and what was its rationale?

My investigation was an example of action research as an “open-ended” form of enquiry, inspired, and loosely influenced by Stringer’s (1999) Interactive Research Model of “looking, thinking and acting”. This model provided a framework in which to build up a picture of “understanding, clarity, and insight”, about how L2 motivation played out over time, with a view to refining, and improving my professional practice.



My investigation had strong philosophical underpinnings. With regard to its philosophy “of” action research, certain ideas were underlying the idea, and practice in my investigation. For example, I agreed with Elliott (2003) that educational theory should not exclusively be developed by social scientists, but could also be potentially developed by practitioners, like myself. I also believed that practitioners like myself, should have some control over what is to count as knowledge about practice. I wanted to, (at least sometimes), have the opportunity to be a “knowledge generator rather than an applier of knowledge generated by outsiders” (Elliott, 1994, p. 133). I also felt that research about a particular context should, (if possible), be conducted by those, like myself, who had lengthy experience, and background knowledge of it, and so were “insiders”, rather than “outsiders”. It has been said that one’s research methods might be partly influenced by one’s underlying epistemological position, (which always remains the same). I failed to agree. My underlying epistemological position, (which comes from having a reasonable foundation in sociological theory, and methods of research), was that as researchers, we should always be pragmatic, and attempt to choose the most suitable, and appropriate methods for our topic of investigation, and therefore our epistemological position might change depending upon the topic under investigation.

For this particular investigation, I therefore decided to adopt an interpretivist approach, (which is defined here as seeking to understand the world from the perspective of the participants), given that the construct that I was investigating, (L2 motivation), could be considered to be abstract, not directly observable, and difficult to quantify, as discussed in 2.1. Furthermore, and as my investigation focused upon motivation as it played out over time, I decided not to use the self-report

measures common in traditional L2 motivational research, for they could only capture L2 motivation at specific time points, not over time. In addition, these self-report measures might constrain the teenagers' meanings, by imposing the researcher's rigid categories upon them. Furthermore, my view was also that self-reports needed to be backed up with behavioural corollaries.

In addition, since I was setting out to also improve my professional practice, I was unable to take a "detached", and "value-free" stance. After all, my personal education philosophy is that as a teacher, I should constantly be "reflecting-in-action", and "reflecting-on-action", as advocated by Schon (1983, 1987). I have always believed that I can impact situations, and make a difference to children's future life-chances. In fact, whilst teaching over the years, I have observed that every educational situation can always be improved, in some way. And, anyway, McDonald (1993) suggested that researchers are misleading others by presenting their research as de-personalised, and "value-free". This is supported by Boyd (2000) who argued that no matter how well-designed, research can never be value-free. Walsh (1999) argued that "value-neutrality", is in itself a value. And more seriously, given that my investigation took place over an extended time-frame, could "value-neutrality" actually have been sustained anyway? However, that was not to say that I was advocating the abandonment of all sense of objectivity, whilst conducting my investigation. I always attempted to be mindful of not slipping into what Eisner (1992) described as a "bottomless pit of (subjective) solipsism" (p. 10). Even so, as my approach was "interpretivist", I had to accept that there might potentially be "multiple realities" related to such a complex, and elusive construct as motivation. The key was not to

accept them uncritically, but seek to understand them, given the action-oriented aspect of my investigation.

With regard to my philosophy “in” action research, although I was investigating an issue of great interest in practical terms, I did not perceive my investigation to be something standing in opposition to more theoretical or philosophical approaches to L2 motivation. As I theorised from the standpoint of action, it was academically unwise not to “connect” to the large body of mainstream motivational theory, and L2 motivational theory, as well as interest research built up over the years. My investigation therefore used concepts, questions, and ideas from this extant body of knowledge, as the starting point of my investigation, as introduced in Chapter 2. However, this was obviously a slightly different approach from some action research which either only uses relevant theories as a resource at a later stage in the research, process, or alternatively, does not even use them at all. In fact, Somekh (2003) pointed out, although John Elliott introduced grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to his students, and did sometimes encourage them to use it, he never took “the simplistic view that theories developed from previous research should be excluded from the research design and analysis” (p. 252) and that latter approach was the adopted position in my investigation.

With regards to the methods in my investigation, I was interested in them for their educative potential, not for reasons of the “disinterested” pursuit of knowledge. I took the position that the methods would develop along with the research content, as the research proceeded. Therefore, my investigation sought to alternate between action, and critical reflection, about not only the data collected, but also the methods

utilised. These spirals of action allowed my investigation to be flexible, and respond to the context. In fact, each spiral afforded me the opportunity to test my interpretations further, not only about my findings, but also about my research methods. Therefore, I had two shots at understanding, which lent a certain degree of rigour.

In sum, this type of research, (action research), was a useful, and appropriate vehicle through which I was able to demonstrate that we, as teachers, could not only conduct research about important research issues, thus contributing to knowledge, (research-oriented), but also use that knowledge to refine, and improve our professional practice, (action-oriented), and make a difference in minor, yet significant ways to many L2 learners' future life-chances.



### **3.1.1 The Research Design: An Overview (Phase A and Phase B)**

My research design comprised two phases, (Phase A and Phase B). Phase A was conducted in another teacher's Grade 10 class, from October 2006-December 2006. Phase B was the follow-on investigation, and it was conducted in my own equivalent Grade 10 class, from January 2007-May 2007. The teacher in Phase A was Mr. Brown, an experienced L2 teacher, who had worked in L2 classrooms in international schools in Asia for approximately ten years.

The aims, and objectives of Phase A were to:

Firstly, totally immerse myself as an observer in this parallel teacher's Grade 10 L2 classroom, in order to start building up a picture of "understanding, clarity and insight" about how L2 motivation played out over time, before building up a further picture in my own L2 classroom in Phase B.

Secondly, test out, and trial my data collection techniques, (3.1.4), to find out if they needed to be refined, and/ or changed, for use in Phase B. As Gass (2001) pointed out "acceptance of the claims made by researchers in any field depends in large on the appropriateness of the methods used to gather data" (p. 10). Phase A was therefore akin to what Yin (1989) described as a "laboratory for the investigators, allowing them to observe different phenomena from many different angles or to try different approaches on a trial basis" (p. 74).

Finally, reflect on whether my initial questions, (3.1.2), needed to be reformulated in light of the data collected in this phase, before proceeding to Phase B. *Table 3.1* sets out my research design in Phase A.

*Table 3.1: The Research Design (Phase A)*

Initial Processes	Outcome of the Processes	Critical Reflection
<i>October 2006-December 2006</i>  – Formulated two questions. (3.1.2) – Collected the data. (3.1.4) – Analysed, and interpreted the data.	<i>October 2006-December 2006</i>  – Produced the findings, whilst comparing, and contrasting them with the theories, and empirical research analysed, and evaluated in Chapter 2.	<i>December 2006</i>  – Were these findings sufficiently detailed, and rich to show how L2 motivation played out over time? (research-oriented) In light of these findings: – Should I reformulate my initial questions for Phase B? (research-oriented) – Should I make improvements to my data collection techniques for Phase B? (research-oriented)

Given the iterative nature of this research design, it must be noted by the reader, that the outcome of the methods utilised in Phase A had to be reported on in this chapter, as an integral part of the research design, for the simple reason that this outcome informed the methods for Phase B. This could be considered to be a slightly unorthodox approach by traditional researchers, who typically report their findings before reflecting on the suitability of their methods, but necessary in iterative research.

The follow-on investigation, (Phase B), was conducted in my own equivalent Grade 10 class, from January 2007-May 2007. I could also be considered to be an experienced L2 teacher, who had worked in the L2 classrooms of Asia for 15 years. Mr. Brown and I had worked alongside one another since 2001.

The aims, and objectives of Phase B were to:

Firstly, build on the emerging picture from Phase A, in order to produce a more substantial, and detailed picture, (than Phase A), of how L2 motivation played out over time, in my own L2 classroom.

Secondly, make useful comparisons, and contrasts between Phase A participants who comprised “average to below average” learners, (3.1.5), and Phase B participants who comprised “average to above average” learners, (3.2.4), in this specific context. In fact, Phase B allowed me to test out whether my initial findings for the first set of participants in Phase A, about how L2 motivation played out over time, were similar for this set of participants. *Table 3.2* sets out my research design in Phase B.

*Table 3.2: The Research Design (Phase B)*

Follow-on Processes	Critical Reflection	Outcome of Processes
<i>January 2007-May 2007</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reformulated the questions based on the data from Phase A. (3.2.1)</li><li>- Improved the data collection techniques. (3.2.2/3)</li><li>- Collected the data utilising the new, and improved data collection techniques.</li></ul>	<i>May-July 2007</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Analysed, and interpreted the data at the end of the school year, (May 2007).</li><li>- Produced a set of findings, and compared, and contrasted them not only with the theories, and empirical research analysed, and evaluated in Chapter 2, but also with my findings from Phase A.</li></ul>	<i>July 2007-March 2008</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Were my interpretations about how L2motivation played out over time still the same as my interpretations from Phase A, in light of these new findings? (research-oriented)</li><li>- Was I now in a position where I could refine, and improve my professional practice to help support L2 learners in this context? (action-oriented)</li></ul>

Phase B clearly benefited from Phase A in that:

Firstly, clearer questions evolved out of the analysis of the data in Phase A.

Secondly, it proceeded with simplified, streamlined, and most importantly tried, and tested data collection techniques.

Thirdly, I, as a researcher, now had some experience of practising analysing, and interpreting various types of data.

In sum, this research design was complicated, interactive, and messy but nonetheless a typical example of a form of “practitioner” research. I struggled to build up understanding, through critical reflection, about how L2 motivation played out over an extended time-frame, (approximately 7 months in the field), from the perspective of teenagers, through processes of iteration, in order to refine, and improve my professional practice.



### **3.1.2 The Initial Questions (Phase A)**

At the outset of this investigation, I formed two broad, and general questions, to focus the enquiry on in Phase A: the first one was about the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation, and the second one about the “postdecisional” stage.

#### **The “Predecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation**

- 1) What general sets of beliefs, and values did the participants report that they brought to the classroom?

#### **The “Postdecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation**

- 2) What key positive, and negative influences did the participants report as impacting upon their L2 motivation, in the classroom over time?

By Phase B however, I was able to refine these broad, and general questions, in light of the data collected in Phase A, and proceeded into Phase B, with more detailed, and specific questions.

### **3.1.3 Choosing Appropriate Data Collection Techniques (Phase A)**

At the outset of the investigation, I realised that I would require data collection techniques which would enable me to build up in-depth understanding about both the general aspect of L2 motivation, (the “predecisional” stage), and also, the situation-specific aspect, (the “postdecisional” stage).

With regards to the “predecisional” stage, data collection techniques had to capture the participants’ sets of beliefs, and values about L2 learning. After all, these may be a critical determinant subsequently impacting on the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation. With regards to the “postdecisional” stage, data collection techniques had to illuminate key influences on motivation in the most comprehensive way possible. Part of my literature review, (2.3), had provided extensive evidence of the influential effects of the classroom context on levels of motivation, and/ or L2 motivation, and most specifically, the effects of the skills, tasks, and/ or activities on it. In addition, my data collection techniques needed to account for not only the “positive” side of L2 motivation, but also the “negative” side.

With regards to both stages, I wanted the participants to have a “voice”, and therefore I did not want to constrain their meanings, and perceptions about L2 motivation, for example, by using too many closed-ended questions in pre-determined categories, created by myself, the researcher, as Clement et al. (1994) did, and had typically been done in much traditional L2 motivational research.

A good starting point therefore seemed to be to get methodological ideas, and inspiration from similar investigations to mine. Unfortunately, it proved difficult to find any investigations that had investigated the temporal aspect of motivation in classrooms generally, and specifically in L2 classrooms. However, some investigations had been conducted which although largely exploratory in nature had focused on key influences on L2 “demotivation” (Chambers, 1993; Oxford, 1998; Ushioda, 1996, 1998; Dornyei, 1998).

Chambers (1993) visited four schools in Leeds, UK, and administered a questionnaire to 191 Year 9 pupils enrolled in eight classes. Seven teachers also filled in a questionnaire. Oxford (1998) used a novel methodological approach of analysing the content of 250 American students’ essays, (both in high schools, and universities), about their learning experiences, over the previous five years. Prompts were utilised, such as “Describe a situation where you experienced conflict with a teacher”. Ushioda (1996, 1998) conducted a two-stage interview study. Dornyei (1998) also adopted a qualitative approach, and conducted semi-structured interviews, (10-30 minutes). These comprised a list of core questions asked at some stage during the interview, but no rigid structure was set, and the interviewers were also advised to allow as much free speech on the part of the participants as possible. However, none of these investigations were types of action research.

Since my investigation was about L2 learners, it also seemed appropriate to get ideas, and inspiration from data collection techniques utilised in the large body of ethnographic investigations involving L2 learners. Ethnographic methods are designed to capture the complexities of particular settings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1993;



Erickson, 1986; Watson-Gegeo, 1988 in Menard-Warwick, 2005). This type of research has tended to collect an extensive amount of data, using a variety of data collection techniques, in order to create a “vivid reconstruction” of the scene studied, and build up “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, 1983). For example, Norton Pierce (1995) used diaries, individual and group interviews, and home visits in her investigation of how, and under what conditions, immigrant women in Canada created, responded to, and sometimes resisted, opportunities to speak English. Menard-Warwick’s (2005) investigation of L2 learners was informed by the methodological models of life-history interviewing, utilised by oral historians who published book-length interviews with immigrants. Question protocols were prepared, but conversations were allowed to develop in unexpected directions. Leki (1995) explored the coping strategies of L2 learners in writing tasks across the curriculum at an American university. She collected an extensive variety of data through interviews with students, and with their professors, observations of their classes, analysis of their journals, and an examination of documents, including written material from the course etc. As so little research existed about the topic that she wanted to investigate, she set out to build up the fullest range of possible writing strategies employed by the L2 learners. Although my investigation dealt with a rather different topic, there were parallels, in that part of my investigation set out to catalogue the fullest range of key influences, both positive, and negative, on L2 motivation in L2 classrooms over time.

In sum, at the outset of my investigation, I concluded that in order to build up a picture of “understanding, clarity, and insight” about how L2 motivation played out over time, from the perspective of teenagers, I required varied, and mixed data collection techniques, similar to some of those used in the above-mentioned



investigations. These perhaps would enable me to contribute a richer picture of L2 motivation over time, and the key influences impacting upon it, than would be possible by just examining single data sources, with limited examinations of specific L2 classroom contexts, as was the case for traditional L2 motivational research. Opting for varied, and mixed data collection techniques, also ensured the data gathered would not solely rely on the participants' self-reports, without the benefits of behavioral corollaries. This would enable me to understand the exceedingly complex construct of L2 motivation, from different angles.

**3.1.4 Gathering the Information: Data Collection Techniques and Procedures (Phase A)**

In this section, detailed information is provided about the data collection techniques utilised in Phase A. As previously discussed, these were experimental, in order to explore different techniques, and approaches, and two data collection techniques were designed for the “predecisional” stage. They were Questionnaire 1, (3.1.4.1), and Questionnaire 2 and interview, (3.1.4.2). In addition, three data collection techniques were designed for the “postdecisional” stage. They were the participants’ journals, (3.1.4.3), my field-notes, (3.1.4.4), and a loosely structured stimulated-recall interview, (3.1.4.5).

Each data collection technique utilised is discussed in individual sections from 3.1.4.1-5. Firstly, the aim of the technique, and the issues examined are outlined, and the procedures used. This is followed by a description of the design format. Then, the rationale for using each technique, is provided. Critical reflection about the success of these is then documented, in order to understand the rationale for the subsequent data collection techniques used in Phase B. *Table 3.3* provides an overview.

*Table 3.3: Data Collection Techniques (Phase A)*

Stage of L2 Motivation	Techniques	Time-frame
“Predecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation	– Questionnaire 1,(Appendix A). – Questionnaire 2 and Interview, (Appendix B).	October 2006
“Postdecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation	– The Participants’ Journals, (Appendix C). – My Field-Notes, (Appendix D). – Course Documents: Materials and Assignments, (Appendix D-1). – The Stimulated-Recall Interview, (Appendix E).	October through to December 2006

### **3.1.4.1 Questionnaire 1**

Questionnaire 1 (Appendix A) was designed to collect general background information about the participants, as well as their views, opinions, and sets of beliefs about learning English in this international context. It was completed by the participants in school, just before the start of the quarter, (half a semester), (the “predecisional” stage).

Motivational themes examined included participants’ perceptions about the value of English, as well as their views about the direction, and magnitude of their motivation to learn English. The themes examined were typical L2 motivational ones, for example, “Why do you want to learn English?”, “How much effort do you put into learning English?”, “Do you like learning other subjects in English?” and, “Do you like learning in an international environment?”

The first 17 questions collected background information about the participants’ nationalities, length of time in an international school etc. For part of this questionnaire, the participants had to circle a response along a continuum, (Questions 18, 19, 20). For example, in Question 19, the participant had to circle whether they perceived themselves to put in either, the most effort possible, quite a bit of effort, an average amount of effort, or not much effort at all. However, Questions 21, and 22 allowed the participants to write in their own words.

I was keenly aware that my investigation had to be conducted within the challenging confines of the school time-table. For example, the participants had four

80 minute lessons each school day, one of which might be a library period.

I therefore chose to use a questionnaire because I felt it would be very efficient in terms of researcher time, and effort, (and would not be regarded as too intrusive by the school administration), as well as fitting in with the participants' tight, and institutionalised schedule, which left them with little free-time. This questionnaire would be a convenient way of gathering baseline data.

This questionnaire helped provide useful background information about the participants, (in a non-intrusive way), as well as shed light on their sets of beliefs, and values about L2 learning, that subsequently could be compared, and contrasted to data about the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation. The data gathered in this questionnaire were contrasted with the participants' self-reports about the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation, as well as my observations of it. The data gathered were also used to raise some key methodological points about traditional L2 measuring instruments. I therefore decided to use this questionnaire again in Phase B.



#### 3.1.4.2 Questionnaire 2 and Interview

Questionnaire 2, and the subsequent interview, (Appendix B), were designed to build up a clearer, and more detailed picture, of the participants' sets of beliefs, and values about L2 learning, and hence build upon the data gathered in Questionnaire 1. This questionnaire was also completed in school just before the start of the quarter. Open-ended, and loosely structured questions were completed in writing by the participants, about these above-mentioned aspects, and followed up in an individual interview. The interviews were conducted after the participants had completed Questionnaire 2. They were tape-recorded, and transcribed, (subject to informed consent from the participants: see full ethical procedures in 3.1.7).

This questionnaire, and interview were based around Dornyei & Otto's (1998) conceptualisation of the "preactional" stage of the L2 motivational process, which they argued involved goal setting, intention formation, and the initiation of intention enactment. The first section was all about goals, that is, do you have any goals in relation to English etc. The second section was about whether the participants expected to achieve their goals, (that is, expectancy-value). The third section was about what the participants' action plans were, and how easy it would be to achieve the goals. Then, I added in a fourth section about general sets of beliefs, and values, which I created by myself.

I chose to have the participants fill in a questionnaire, and then conduct a subsequent interview about it although I initially envisaged conducting an interview with the participants without having them fill in the questionnaire. I felt that an

interview, which is a type of conversation “initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation” (Cohen & Manion, 1989, p. 307), had many advantages, and would be a useful data collection technique when used to explore what a person likes or dislikes, (their values or preferences), and what a person thinks, (their attitudes or beliefs). Furthermore, the distinct advantage of the interview would be that it allowed for two-way communication. Participants would be able to seek clarification, fundamentally important for these participants whose first language was not English. There would also be the possibility of using the spontaneity of face-to-face communication to expand on questions, ask follow-up questions, seek clarification, or change the direction of the interview.

However, even although I decided to use interviews, I was still aware of their disadvantages. For example, it would be a time-consuming process, and given the time-constraints already discussed in relation to the school time-table, a fairly ambitious undertaking. In addition, given that the interviewees were L2 learners, I was concerned about an issue that Vann & Abraham (2001) raised about questionnaires, and interviews in general, that seemed particularly pertinent with regards to L2 learners, that is, do they really understand what they are being asked in interviews? For example, whilst completing a questionnaire, a participant, (especially an L2 learner), would have time to check their electronic dictionary, and work at their own pace. However, in an interview, they may feel under more pressure to respond to questions quickly, even although they may not have the linguistic agility required to express what it is that they really want to say. To be sensitive to these type of



linguistic needs, it seemed sensible to give them the questionnaire before the complex interview which would give them time to check vocabulary, consolidate what they would want to say, and generally would make them feel more comfortable, and confident in the interview.

I decided not to just administer the questionnaire because I took the position that at this stage of my investigation, I was experimenting with different methodological options. In addition, given that I was going to be spending a long time with the participants, (approximately three months), the interview would give me the opportunity in a face-to-face situation, to start to build up my relationship with the participants, and get to understand their L2 motivational situation better. In addition, it would also give me more opportunities to triangulate data. For example, I could compare this data with that written in the questionnaire.

Unfortunately, this data technique was possibly the most unsuccessful, in Phase A. This was partly to do with the fact that I was asking too complicated, theoretical questions, about the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation. The first section on goals was repetitive, and the participants answered in a very simplistic way, for example, “My goal is to learn English to travel”. The second section on intention formation was also repetitive in that every participant said their parents, their friends, and their teachers felt it was important to be really good at English. Therefore, data yielded were essentially meaningless. The third stage on initiation of intention enactment posed the questions in a way that was difficult to answer. For example, do you expect to achieve your goals? All participants said “yes”. In short, my questionnaire had too many items, was repetitive, and also had some quite long

sentences which were above the standard of these young participants' English. In fact, I realised that I had inadvertently put them into a very challenging linguistic situation. I hoped it did not affect their general attitude to learning English, and I vowed to think of, and design, a better data collection technique to target this "predecisional" stage of L2 motivation, in more detail, and more effectively, in Phase B.





### 3.1.4.3 The Participants' Journals

The journal, (Appendix C), was designed to collect data about motivation over time, and the key influences impacting upon it, from the perspective of teenagers. Galloway et al., (1998) argued that in order to move understanding of motivational processes forward, we need to see how children themselves understand the tasks they are given, and this data collection technique had the potential to do so. What I was particularly interested in was motivational trends, and patterns over time, as this had been downplayed by the dominant traditions.

A journal, (note-book), was completed over a five to ten minute period, by each of the participants, at the end of every lesson, throughout the course of the quarter. It examined whether they were motivated, or not, during each individual lesson over the course of the quarter, and accessed the underlying reasons, (in their own words). By not constraining their views, and having a simple, "I am motivated because....." and/ or "I am not motivated because....." meant it was possible to collect data that really represented the participants' very own perspectives about whether they were motivated, or not, as well as key positive, and negative influences impacting upon their L2 motivation, in the most novel manner. At the outset of my investigation, I defined what motivation meant, in simple terms, for the participants, that is, do you want to do things in the classroom, or not. And, I asked the participants to document what was influencing this motivation.

I used a journal because it is a popular data collection technique in ethnographic research, (Leki, 1995; Norton Pierce, 1995; Menard-Warwick 2005). Action

researchers often also utilise this technique to focus on teachers reflecting “on”, and “in”, their professional practice, (Lee & Ng, 1999; Neville, 1999). With regards to children, it is a highly effective technique recommended by Rudduck (1996) in the context of the movement of student “voice”. Action research also has links with this movement, (Hadfield & Haw, 2001). My view was that it also provided the opportunity to move beyond static “snapshot in time” data, and access them on an ongoing basis, over an extended time-frame. As such, it seemed an appropriate way to look at L2 motivation through a “different window” from the traditional L2 motivational research outlined in 2.2.1. However, it should not be the sole method utilised in the “postdecisional” stage. In fact, Burgess (1981) argued that a journal should be seen as a “precursor” to an interview, as was the case with the loosely structured stimulated-recall interview used, (Appendix E). In addition, by triangulating all data collected from the journals, with other data gathered through other data collection techniques might give confidence about the “trustworthiness” of the data from the journals.

This was possibly one of the most successful data collection techniques of Phase A for several reasons. Firstly, it provided fascinating data, (even although the words were simple, and basic, these were the participants’ own words), about not only whether they were motivated, and/ or not, as well as what key positive, and negative influences were impacting upon them, over time, thus achieving my objective of not constraining their views in rigid categories, determined by myself, and also illuminating motivational trends, and patterns. Secondly, this technique was particularly suitable, and appropriate for these teenagers, as they seemed to enjoy journaling, at the end of every lesson. For example, participants regularly stayed

behind to fill in their journals, even though there was absolutely no pressure on them to do so. I therefore decided to use this technique again in Phase B, but over a longer time-frame, (24 lessons).



#### **3.1.4.4 My Field-Notes**

At the outset, observation was also a major part of my research design. The aim of my field-notes, **(Appendix D)**, was to “look with purpose”, to capture “slices of life”, about not only the L2 learning behaviour demonstrated by the participants, but also my interpretations of Mr. Brown’s actions, and behavior, over time. These field-notes also allowed for meaningful non-verbal information to be recorded, which potentially carried a lot of meaning. Examples included facial expressions, gestures, and where, and in what manner, the participants were sitting in the classroom etc. This type of documentation was of paramount importance in relation to L2 learning behaviour, and had not been collected by more dominant paradigms of research, which had focused more on learners’ cognitions.

My field-notes therefore documented observed L2 learning behaviour in Mr. Brown’s classroom, as noted by myself, written as a narrative, (for example, what was happening in terms of the tasks, and group interactions etc). These valuable data were used to:

- 1) establish whether what the participants wrote about key positive, and negative influences, in their completed journals, **(Appendix C)**, seemed to match up to what I interpreted as their actual L2 learning behavior, and/or views in the L2 classroom.
- 2) help make specific questions, tailored to each participant, to inform the subsequent loosely structured stimulated-recall interviews, **(Appendix E)**.

In addition, all the actual classes, (12 lessons), were audio-taped, but not transcribed. If any doubts arose about what was written in my field-notes, **(Appendix**



D), these audiotapes were examined, in order to clarify the doubts, thus ensuring that the participants received an accurate representation of what was happening in the classroom. These data could be compared with other data to provide a degree of “authenticity”, and “trustworthiness”.

All course materials, course assignments, and the teacher’s comments about class assignments were collected, and stored in order, from Lessons 1-12, (Appendix D-1)

There are essentially two types of observation, structured, and unstructured. The rationale for using this unstructured approach was that I was keen to not reduce L2 learning behaviour to, for example, “20 observable criteria”, by using a classroom checklist, and as such defining the target behaviour in advance, as other researchers have done in related fields. For example, the Beaverton Project (2001) set out to observe interaction patterns in the classroom using codes, and definitions for target behavior, as well as codes, and definitions for social partner behaviour. Then, these interaction patterns could be quantified. But, I was mindful of the fact that a significant amount of research about L2 motivation has already been done in a reductionist way. It seemed unwise to look for x number of identifiable criteria, because other previously unknown, yet important factors could be overlooked because they were not on the “list”. It would be important to keep an open-mind as to what L2 learning behaviour would be observed, particularly at this early stage of the investigation. And in fact, in practical terms, it would be almost impossible to second-guess in advance, what every conceivable observable behavioural criteria could potentially be, in relation to this specific context. Attempting to do this could constrain the focus of my enquiry.

This was another extremely successful technique in that I was able to be an active observer getting “inside the minds” of not only the participants, but also the teacher over an extended time-frame. Being so immersed in the L2 classes with the participants made me reflect carefully upon what L2 learning behaviour they were displaying, and the key influences impacting upon them over time. I would use this technique again in Phase B, but as mentioned with regards to the journal, over a longer time-frame.

### **3.1.4.5 The Stimulated-Recall Interview**

The stimulated-recall interview, (Appendix E), was designed to facilitate a deeper, and fuller understanding about the entries in the participants' journals, (Appendix C). Stimulated-recall interviews are often used in research about SLA, because this research is faced with the same problem as psychological research, that is, L2 learning processes, like motivational processes, cannot be observed. Stimulated-recall is part of "introspection" but has not, however, always been regarded as a valid tool for gathering information about knowledge of language (Smagorinsky, 2001). The interviews were conducted as closely after every lesson as possible, to ensure that the participants could remember each lesson clearly, tape-recorded, and transcribed, (subject to informed consent from the participants: see full ethical procedures in 3.1.7). This was in line with the idea that recall should be consecutive, that is, immediately following the event, (in this case, lessons) (Mackey, Gass & McDonough, 2000).

It is important to take note that however successful this technique might have been, this would be the only data collection technique which could only be utilised in this first phase, to build up understanding, and not used again in Phase B, due to ethical considerations, (see 3.2.6 for further details).

My field-notes, (Appendix D), and participants' entries in their journals, (Appendix C), were used to make open-ended questions, for the loosely structured stimulated-recall interviews, for each participant about every lesson, (Appendix E), lasting about 5-10 minutes for each lesson. Questions were asked like, "Yu Chen,



you said that you did not like working in groups in lesson X. Can you explain in more detail?”

“I noticed that you did not contribute much to the group discussion in lesson Y. Can you tell me why?”

I chose this data collection technique because I envisaged that these interviews would enable me to collect more in-depth data about key positive, and negative influences impacting upon L2 motivation.

Although I stated that I would not be using this technique again, it was still disappointing to note that it was largely unsuccessful, in that it did not appear to yield any deeper data than what had already been collected through the journals, and my own field-notes. For example, I asked questions like, “You said you did not like working in groups”. The response would be, “Yes, I don’t like working in groups. I don’t like x student”. According to Gass (2001) there are numerous reasons why stimulated recall interviews fail, one of which is that the researcher does not adequately train the participants in the art of verbalization. This I did not do, and even if I did, the participants’ level of English may also have affected this.



### **3.1.5 The Participants (Phase A)**

The participants were a mixture of Asian L2 learners, all of middle to upper-middle socio-economic status.

My international school currently had approximately six hundred students, from ages three to eighteen, comprising approximately forty different nationalities, (as of March, 2007). There were approximately one hundred and sixty students in the high school, (Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12), (as of March, 2007). In addition, student numbers fluctuated on a continual basis because they could join at any point throughout the school year. Numbers in classes, and the make-up of nationalities in classes were therefore constantly evolving.

The intake in this school was not selective, but upon enrolment, L2 learners took an English placement test, (the Maculitis Test), to measure their level of attainment, and on the basis of their performance, were subsequently streamed into their English classes. However, being a small school meant that the participants typically ended up in one of two L2 English classes, that is, one for the “average to less than average” students, or one for “average to above average” students. These Phase A participants were classified as “average to less than average”.

They were all studying for an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IBMYP) Grade 10 qualification. (For background information, native speakers of English, or those with native-like competence would take another IBMYP English course). The IBMYP was a five-year programme spanning Grades 6-10,

comprising eight subjects. If these participants were to take IGCSE examinations, they would take an IGCSE paper called “Second Language English”. This Grade 10 English class also supported them in their studies in other subjects, for example, Humanities, and Co-ordinated Science in mainstream classes, with native, and/ or near-native language speakers.

These participants had all been in an international school environment for only a relatively short time. It was therefore important not to assume that because they were from relatively wealthy backgrounds in their countries of origin, that they would not have any problems settling into this context, or that they would be used to, and familiar with it. Furthermore, being “wealthy” in Vietnam, for example, may be different from being “wealthy” in Scandinavia, or America. However, that is another topic beyond the scope of my investigation.

Below, are some extracts from a female participant’s essay that illustrated how she was forced to cope with the demands of life in an unfamiliar environment.

“Everything here with me was so strange, very different from Vietnam. From the culture, the way to living, to foods, the environment, the people.....everything made me afraid”.

“Especially I have to take care of myself that’s really difficult with a 17 years old girl like me. I have to remind myself to study, eating, sleeping reasonable and resist with some allures outside.”

Jenny, 17, Vietnam.

Phase A comprised 10 participants, with 5 females, and 5 males. Two additional new male students from Korea joined the class towards the end of the quarter, but chose not to participate in the investigation, because of their severely limited English proficiency.

Having given the potential participants, and teacher detailed information about this investigation, each original class member, and the teacher agreed to participate over the course of the quarter, and signed the informed consent forms, (see full details of ethical forms distributed and signed, in 3.1.7). *Table 3.4* provides background information about all the female, and male participants, (females are in *italics*).

*Table 3.4: The Participants (Phase A)*

Name	Age	Nationality	Length of time in an international school	Oct '06: English Grade**	December '06: English Grade**
<i>Jenny</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Vietnamese</i>	<i>6 months</i>	5	5
Ken	16	Vietnamese	1 year	5	5
<i>Linda</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Hong Kong Chinese</i>	<i>1 year</i>	4	5
<i>Fumiko</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Japanese</i>	<i>2.5 years</i>	4	4
Edward	16	Mongolian	4 months	4	3
Tom	16	Taiwanese	1 year	4	3
Chan	17	Taiwanese	1 year	4	3
<i>Akiyo</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Japanese</i>	<i>1 year</i>	3	3
Bobby	16	Chinese	6 months	3	2
<i>Lola</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Vietnamese</i>	<i>1.5 years</i>	2	2

**\*\*IBO MYP Grades:** 7 is the highest, (A\*), to 1 being the lowest, (U), 3 is a basic pass.



### 3.1.6 The Analysis and Interpretation of the Data (Phase A)

I firstly considered what Stringer's (1999) three-phase action research model recommended with regards to examining, analysing, and interpreting data. After collecting all the required data, this model suggested identifying key elements, that is, identify what information is significant. Secondly, formulate categories, and themes from the actual data themselves, (a "grounded" approach, based on Glaser & Strauss' (1967) grounded theory. However, my research design in this phase had to be guided by the principle that analysis could not be the last phase in its research process. It would have to be concurrent with data collection or cyclic (Tesch, 1990). For example, it would not have been possible to create the questions needed in order to conduct the loosely structured stimulated-recall interview (Appendix E), without having analysed, and interpreted the data from my field-notes, (Appendix D), and the journals, (Appendix C). Therefore, my analysis, and interpretation began as soon as the first set of data were collected in Questionnaire 1, (Appendix A), and did not only run parallel to data collection, but the two became integrated (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 109).

From the outset, I started by reading, and re-reading, on a daily basis, in a reflective way, in order that preliminary questions jumped out from the jigsaw puzzle of data. These data started to "talk back". All data in this type of interpretive investigation were analysed in a systematic, and comprehensive fashion. Attending to the data included a "reflective activity", that resulted in an analytical set of "notes" that guided the process. These notes helped to move easily from data to a "conceptual level" (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Data were "segmented", and divided into



relevant, and meaningful units. These data segments were categorised by an organising system that was solely derived from the data themselves. *Table 3.5* gives an overview of the way that the data were analysed, and interpreted.

*Table 3.5: The Data Analysis and Interpretation (Phase A)*

Stage of L2 Motivation	Data Collection Technique	The Analysis and Interpretation
"Predecisional" Stage	Questionnaire 1, (Appendix A).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The questionnaires were read, and re-read, and then the data were sorted into key, and relevant categories, for example, age, nationality, length of time in an international school, participants' grades at the start, and end of the quarter.</li> <li>- The questionnaires were read, and re-read and the data were then sorted into five key categories, about the participants' "choice" motivation, and their grades at the end of the quarter were also listed.</li> </ul>
"Predecisional" Stage	Questionnaire 2 and Interview, (Appendix B).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The data from the questionnaires were read, and re-read, and I tried to sort them into salient categories, and themes, but I was unable to.</li> <li>- The data from the interviews were transcribed, but not categorised, as they did not make sense.</li> </ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	The Participants' Journals , (Appendix C).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Every sentence about positive influences was listed in blue, and every sentence about negative influences was listed in red, for every participant.</li> <li>- Key categories, and themes emerged from the participants' own words.</li> <li>- These key positive, and negative categories were listed in rank order for all participants, with numbers, (showing weightings), and examples, to provide weight of opinion data.</li> <li>- These data were also used to show L2 motivational fluctuation over time, for all participants, by using my original coding system of O, OX, and X, to show whether each participant was fully motivated, both motivated and not motivated, or not motivated in each lesson, over the course of the quarter.</li> <li>- These data, and the above described categorisation system was further used to show the underlying reasons for L2 motivational fluctuation, for a set of three "good", and three "poor" participants.</li> </ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	My Field-Notes, (Appendix D).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The field-notes were transcribed after each of the 12 lessons.</li> </ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	Course Documents, (Appendix D-1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These were stored in order, from Lessons 1 through to 12.</li> </ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	The Stimulated-Recall Interview, (Appendix E).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An attempt was made to transcribe the interviews for every lesson, for every participant, in order to identify categories, and themes, but this was not possible due to the poor quality of the data.</li> </ul>

### **3.1.7 The Ethical Considerations (Phase A)**

The ethical principles, codes, and rules that guided my investigation at the outset were as follows:

Firstly, I had protect the rights of the children, teachers, and administration as this investigation touched on potentially sensitive issues like the evaluation of an L2 teacher, the L2 course, and indirectly, the school itself.

I had to strive to guarantee student anonymity, thus ensuring that they felt confident to speak freely, and potentially critically, about their experiences. It was not satisfactory to merely tell them once that their anonymity would be guaranteed, and subsequently forget about this sensitive research issue. I therefore decided to demonstrate to the participants with concrete actions that they could say anything they wanted, and still feel totally confident that their anonymity was guaranteed. For example, I made it clear that their teacher would only see anonymised group data. As such, all data collected, (taped interviews, journals, field-notes, and transcripts), were documented, kept confidential, (locked in a brief-case at all times), and would be destroyed in due course, (after completion of the investigation). Hence, I believe that they did realise that there was no possibility that their comments could adversely affect their grades, and/ or, their position in this school, and therefore wrote, and spoke freely about their L2 motivational experiences. However, I do also concede that full, and frank disclosures may have been unlikely, whatever steps I took.



In addition, informed consent of the participants was also obtained, (Appendix 1). An information sheet about the aims, and purposes of the research was also provided, (in laypersons' language), (Appendix 2). After the completion of the project, the participants were provided with a summary of the project, and its results, (in laypersons' language), (Appendix 3).

I recognised my obligation to protect the rights of the teacher who kindly agreed to participate in the investigation. As Elliott (1991) pointed out, there is “a dilemma.... for the teacher which arises from a conflict between the value of critical openness to pupils and respect for the professional expertise of colleagues and their right to exercise authority within the confines of their own classroom” (p. 59). I felt this keenly, and I was worried about unintended consequences for my colleague.

I also had to ensure that the investigation was not seen as “objectionable” by the “gatekeepers”, (school administration), who had given permission for this investigation to take place. That partly involved me conducting myself in the most professional, and transparent manner as possible, and this was especially important in my investigation, given that it spanned approximately seven months of an academic year. Pring (2001) talked about the “virtues” of the researcher being more important than the principles, codes, and rules which should guide an investigation. Therefore, I attempted to act as “virtuously” as possible in my research conduct so that I did not make things difficult for myself, and/ or other future potential researchers, who also wanted to get permission to do research in this type of authentic teaching, and learning environment. I therefore pointed out to the school administration that the focus in my investigation was on understanding more about the process of how L2

motivation played out over time, in response to key influences in L2 classrooms in this particular context, (which I believed to be an issue of fundamental importance), with a view to improving my professional practice, and subsequently others, through in-house professional development. They were subsequently informed about my interpretations of how L2 motivation played out over time, in this context, and I introduced my framework for reconfiguring L2 lessons according to a core set of motivational principles, which they could adopt, and/ or adapt. I pointed out to them that it also seemed preferable that this research was conducted by someone who was very familiar with L2 learners in this educational context, (an “insider” like me, as opposed to an “outsider”).

In sum, I placed the utmost importance on ethics. It must not be forgotten that the classroom contexts were not set up to provide a venue for research, but for the purposes of teaching, and learning.



### **3.1.8 The Research Lessons Learned (Phase A)**

I learnt some valuable lessons about being a researcher through experience in Phase A, that I now needed to take into account for Phase B.

Lesson 1: Think carefully about whether the data collection techniques will yield data which will shed light on the focus of enquiry.

I realised whilst analysing the data, that my data collection techniques had not enabled me to build up quite as substantial, and detailed a picture of the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation, as I would have wished. I also realised that I had expended valuable research time on Questionnaire 2, and the interview, (Appendix B), with very poor results. However, that was probably more to do with me being an inexperienced researcher, as opposed to the method. I therefore needed to gather more in-depth data about the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation in Phase B, through a different technique. In addition, with regards to the “postdecisional” stage of L2 motivation, I had wasted yet more valuable time on the stimulated-recall interview thus showing that seemingly sophisticated techniques may not be useful in some instances. Again, this was possibly due to faults on my part, for example, not training the participants properly in the art of verbalization.

In sum, I had to stop this level of “experimentation” with data collection techniques, and review them to ensure that I could better access the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation in Phase B.

Lesson 2: Choose data collection techniques which are suitable, and appropriate for the participants.

Questionnaire 2, and the interview had been unsuccessful, and not yielded in-depth data because using a complicated questionnaire, and subsequent interview in English with Asian L2 learners appeared to be neither appropriate nor suitable. In fact, many of the participants in Phase A liked to write things down, and if they were going to speak, they needed a lot of time to think about what they were going to say. I should have taken this into consideration more carefully, especially considering that I had been teaching L2 learners in Asia for so many years. I therefore learned through experience, that a key consideration with regards to choosing data collecting techniques would be to choose the most suitable, and appropriate ones for the specific participants, since the success of the investigation is dependent on this (Gass, 2001).

Lesson 3: Using a proliferation of data collection techniques will not necessarily improve the “richness” of the data.

The process of gathering insightful data need not have involved a large number of different techniques, and approaches, as often seemed to be advocated by those adopting an ethnographic/ qualitative research approach, for example, (Leki, 1995; Norton Pierce, 1995; Menard-Warwick, 2005). Whilst it seems important to triangulate data, this does not need to be done in more than one or two ways. Therefore the data collection techniques could be, (hypothetically), just one or two

trusty, and simple techniques. There is no need to “over-engineer” the techniques for “effect”, as was the case with the stimulated-recall interview.

Lesson 4: Analysing the data is a complicated, yet intuitive process, which evolves over time, and is best learned through practice.

Analysing the data is possibly one of the most complicated parts of the research process. This is where I really struggled to build my own level of understanding. Practice is what seems to be required in analysing data, and that would include thinking, and engaging with the data over time. In fact, the best way to analyse data in this type of investigation seems to be to build up themes, and categories, from the participants’ own words. There is therefore not much point in predicting how the data will be analysed, at the outset of the investigation. And in fact, reading about how to analyse data in textbooks is a curiously theoretical, de-contextualised process. But once I had analysed the data, I realised that I could also utilise these categorisations of the data from Phase A to create more refined questions for Phase B.

Lesson 5: Start developing understanding about the topic under investigation, as soon as possible.

Regardless of the “technical” errors related to data collection techniques in Phase A, I was still able to start developing understanding about how L2 motivation played out over time, by being an active observer in this classroom, over an extended time-frame. As I observed the participants in the L2 classroom, I felt I was really “standing in their shoes”. This was different from all my past experiences as a teacher observing



children because I was looking at the class with motivation in mind, and within the parameters of my investigation, not just as a regular class teacher thinking about grouping etc.

I also started to reflect upon the similarities, and differences between my colleague's professional practice and my own, and chat to him and even other teachers in general terms, about some of the L2 motivational issues that seemed to be surfacing, at the end of the phase, whilst still protecting the rights of the participants. These patterns of communication, and collegiality have been documented by other action researchers, for example, (Selener, 1997). I was already making progress towards refining, and improving my own professional practice, even although I had not yet collected data in my own classroom. Whilst a sceptic might argue that they would not be wholly convinced that I, a very experienced teacher, has suddenly gained lots of important new insights, during this time, my point was that I had started to look at my teaching in a more in-depth, and focused way, and it also confirmed my belief that I could influence the circumstances in which I taught. These points were also documented by Zeichner, (1997) in his Madison Wisconsin Classroom Action Research Project.

In sum, Phase A was a very positive, and enlightening research experience, which enabled me to start building up a picture of how L2 motivation played out over time, (research-oriented), and start reflecting upon what practical strategies could refine, and improve my professional practice, (action-oriented). Collecting data in an authentic context, over an extended time-frame is not easy, and of course, with hindsight some of my methods were poorly executed. Even so, somewhat "rich" data



about the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation had still emerged, but it was important to be mindful of accessing more in-depth data about the sets of beliefs, and values that the participants brought with them to the L2 classroom in the next phase, (Phase B).

### **3.2 An Overview of the Research Design (Phase B)**

The aim of Phase B was to look at how L2 motivation developed over time, in my own Grade 10 L2 classroom, from January 2007-May 2007. I was interested to see whether my interpretations remained the same as for Phase A, (research-oriented).

In 3.1.1, I set out the overview for both Phase A and Phase B. Table 3.2 illustrated my intended research design for Phase B. To recap, the aims, and objectives of this latter phase were to:

- 1) Reformulate the Phase A questions, in light of the data now collected for use in Phase B, (3.2.1).
- 2) Improve upon the data collection techniques utilised in Phase A, (3.2.2/3).
- 3) Collect the data in Phase B, but not interpret them until the end of the school year, (May 2007), for ethical reasons, (see 3.2.6 for discussion).

As stated in 3.1, this research design afforded me the flexibility to develop the data collection techniques as the research proceeded. It also moved from action, (Phase A), to critical reflection, (on Phase A's findings, and methods), before taking further action, (Phase B). These spirals of action, and critical reflection thus enabled me to relate my findings, (from Phase A), to those of Phase B.

After these two rounds of action, and critical reflection, I had a deeper understanding not only about how L2 motivation played out over time, (research-oriented), but also how it would be possible in concrete ways to refine, and improve my professional practice, (action-oriented).

### **3.2.1 The Refined Questions (Phase B)**

After critical reflection about my findings in Phase A, I reformulated my questions.

#### **The “Predecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation**

- 1) To what extent did the participants value English, and why?
- 2) To what extent were the participants satisfied with their proficiency in English?
- 3) Did the participants highlight effort or ability as more important, with regards to learning English, and why?
- 4) To what extent did the participants like studying in an international school?

#### **The “Postdecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation**

- 5) Was L2 motivation stable, and/ or fluid over time, from the perspective of the participants?
- 6) What key positive, and negative influences did the participants report as impacting upon their L2 motivation, in the classroom over time?
- 7) Were some participants more, or less, motivated than other participants in this classroom? If so, what were the underlying reasons for this?



### **3.2.2 Refining the Data Collection Techniques (Phase B)**

By testing, and trialing a wide variety of data collection techniques in Phase A, and subsequently reflecting critically on this process, I was now in a position to refine them. I believed that I had made a mistake by focusing more on conventional research techniques in Phase A, and rather overlooking the different forms of enquiry specifically favoured by action research. Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1993) described four different forms of systematic, and intentional enquiry by teachers in North America: journals, oral enquiries, studies which represented teachers' explorations of their work using data based on observations, interviews, and document collection, and essays. Essays seemed to be very promising technique given that Oxford (1998) had already tried these with L2 learners, (250 American students in high school, as well as university), and I realised that I needed techniques appropriate for L2 learners in my context, who enjoyed writing things down, (as had been demonstrated in the journals), and had limited time in this institutionalised context.

I decided to:

- Drop Questionnaire 2 and the interview completely.
- Drop the stimulated-recall interview.
- Create a set of four x 500 word essays, in the style of Oxford (1998), related to the sets of beliefs, and values that the participants brought to the class with them.

**3.2.3 Gathering the Information: Data Collection Techniques and Procedures (Phase B)**

In this section, detailed information is provided about the data collection techniques utilised in this phase, and the procedures followed.

Questionnaire 1 from Phase A, was used to start the collection of data about the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation, (3.2.3.1). A new technique was introduced to gain further, and deeper understanding about this stage, (essay writing), (Appendix B), (3.2.3.2). The journal, and field-notes approaches were utilised again to collect data about the “postdecisional” stage, Appendix C, (3.2.3.3) and Appendix D, (3.2.3.4), respectively. *Table 3.6* provides an overview of these.

*Table 3.6: The Data Collection Techniques (Phase B)*

Stage of L2 Motivation	Techniques	Time-frame
“Predecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation	– Questionnaire 1, (Appendix A). – Four 500-word Essays about Key L2 Motivation Themes, (Appendix B).	January 2007
“Postdecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation	– The Participants’ Journals, (Appendix C). – My Field-Notes, (Appendix D). – Course Documents: Materials and Assignments, (Appendix D-1).	January through to May 2007

Each of these techniques is discussed in individual sections, from 3.2.3.1-4. Firstly, the aim of the technique, and the issues examined are outlined, alongside the procedures used. This is followed by a description of the design format. Then, the rationale for using the technique is provided, and the extent to which it was successful is outlined.

### **3.2.3.1 Questionnaire 1**

Questionnaire 1 was utilised again, (Appendix A), in exactly the same format, to collect general background information about this second set of participants, and their sets of beliefs, and values about L2 learning. It was completed in school just before the start of the semester. The aim of this data collection technique, the issues examined, the design format, and the rationale for utilising this technique were exactly the same as in Phase A, and it was equally as successful.

### **3.2.3.2 Four 500-word Essays about Key L2 Motivational Themes**

This series of four 500-word essays, (**Appendix B**), was designed to build on the data collected in Questionnaire 1, with the aim of targeting the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation in more detail, and more effectively, than Phase A. The themes of these four essays were key L2 motivational themes considered important in the social psychological research tradition: Firstly, why do you value English, (Do you want to do English?) Secondly, are you happy with your proficiency in English, (Can you do English?) Thirdly, is effort or ability more important with regards to English? Finally, do you like studying in an international context? The participants were given four prompts about these key themes, just before the start of the semester, and asked to write these essays as soon as possible, in computer time, and/ or library time during school hours.

This series of essays was successful in that they:

Firstly, provided authentic, and meaningful data constructed in the participants’ own way about the themes that the dominant social psychological tradition regarded as important, and had investigated in a quantitative way.

Secondly, were an appropriate, and suitable data collection technique for Asian L2 learners who enjoyed writing essays.

Finally, overcame the previously described challenges surrounding school timetables, and interviewing time.



### **3.2.3.3 The Participants' Journals**

The aims, the issues examined, the design, the rationale for utilising this technique, (Appendix C), remained exactly the same as Phase A. However, in Phase B, data were gathered over a longer time-frame than Phase A: 24 lessons compared with 12 lessons, previously. The same procedures were followed as Phase A, and this technique was also as successful as Phase A, although it benefited from the longer time-frame.

#### **3.2.3.4 My Field-Notes**

Field-notes, (**Appendix D**), were utilised again. However, whilst they were examining the same issues as for Phase A, there was a procedural change in that I was both the teacher, and the researcher in this L2 class. At the outset, I was worried that it might be more difficult to write detailed notes because of this. However, in Phase A, many of the participants had asked me for help on their tasks, and treated me as part of the class, not as a detached observer. In fact, there was actually plenty of time to write detailed notes as the participants worked on tasks, and I ensured that I wrote them up as soon as I stepped out of the L2 classroom. But, I do concede that it is more difficult to study oneself in action, as opposed to another teacher, in this case, Mr. Brown. However, I still believe that all practitioners should reflect about themselves in action, and compare, and contrast themselves with other colleagues.

All course materials, course assignments, and my comments about class assignments were collected, and stored in order, from Lessons 1-24, (**Appendix D-1**).

### 3.2.4 The Participants (Phase B)

There were 13 participants, comprising 7 females, and 6 males, taught by myself. One female, and two male students from Korea joined the class close to the end of the semester, but chose not to participate in the investigation. These participants were categorised as “average to above average” students, (see English grades).

Having given them detailed information about this investigation, each class member agreed to participate over the course of the semester, (24 lessons), and signed the informed consent forms, (see full details of ethical forms distributed, and signed in 3.2.6). For full details of the general profile of participants in this international school refer to 3.1.5. *Table 3.7* provides background information about all the female, and male participants in this phase, (females are in *italics*).

*Table 3.7: The Participants (Phase B)*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Length of time in an international school</b>	<b>Jan '07: English Grade**</b>	<b>May '07: English Grade**</b>
<i>Georgie</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>Taiwanese</i>	<i>2 years</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Tiffany</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Taiwanese</i>	<i>2 years</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Min Sung</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Korean</i>	<i>1 year</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Dong Hyub</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Korean</i>	<i>2 years</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Brian</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Korean</i>	<i>11 months</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>1 year</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Sue</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Serbian</i>	<i>2 years</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Jack</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>8 months</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Derek</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Korean</i>	<i>9 months</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Anne</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>1 year</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Akio</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Japanese</i>	<i>5 years</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Yoon</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Korean</i>	<i>1 year</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Midori</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Japanese</i>	<i>1 year</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>

**\*\*IBO MYP Grades:** 7 is the highest, (A\*), to 1 being the lowest, (U),  
3 is a basic pass.



### 3.2.5 The Analysis and Interpretation of the Data (Phase B)

By Phase B, I had a much clearer understanding of how to interpret these data in light of my findings in Phase A. *Table 3.8* gives an overview of the way that the data were analysed, and interpreted.

*Table 3.8: The Data Analysis and Interpretation (Phase B)*

Stage of L2 Motivation	Data Collection Technique	The Analysis and Interpretation
"Predecisional" Stage	- Questionnaire 1, (Appendix A).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- These data were analysed, and interpreted in exactly the same way as in Phase A.</li><li>- These data were sorted into the five key categories about the participants' "choice" motivation, and their grade at the end of the semester was also listed, in the same way as Phase A.</li></ul>
"Predecisional" Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Four 500-word essays: (Appendix B).</li><li>- Essay 1: The "Value" of English, (Do I want to "do" it?)</li><li>- Essay 2: Participants' proficiency, (Can I "do" it?)</li><li>- Essay 3: Is effort or ability more important with regards to learning English?</li><li>- Essay 4: Do you like studying in this international context?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- For each essay, salient or recurring themes were searched for by repeatedly reading, examining, and classifying the data collected.</li><li>- Categories, and themes emerged from the participants' own words.</li><li>- Categories were listed on tables, where possible, in rank order with numbers, (to show weightings), and examples, for all participants together from Essay 1 through to 4.</li></ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	The Participants' Journals, (Appendix C).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The same processes were used to interpret these data as in Phase A.</li><li>- Every sentence about positive influences was listed in blue, and every sentence about negative influences was listed in red.</li><li>- Key categories, and themes emerged from the participants' own words.</li><li>- These key positive, and negative influences were listed in rank order for all participants together, with numbers, (to show weightings), and examples, to provide weight of opinion data.</li><li>- These data were also used to show L2 motivational fluctuation, over time, for all participants, by using my original coding system of O, OX, and X to show whether each participant was fully motivated, both motivated and not motivated, and not motivated over the course of the semester.</li><li>- These data and the above described categorisation system was further used to show the underlying reasons for L2 motivational fluctuation for a set of three "good" participants, and three "average" participants.</li></ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	My Field-Notes, (Appendix D).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The field notes were transcribed after each of the 24 lessons.</li></ul>
"Postdecisional" Stage	Course documents, (Appendix D-1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- These were stored in order from Lessons 1 through to 24.</li></ul>

### **3.2.6 The Ethical Considerations (Phase B)**

The same ethical principles, codes, and rules were applied in this phase of the investigation, (see 3.1.7 for full discussion), however, with regards to the participants in Phase B, protecting the rights of the children was even more complicated, because I was now both the teacher, and the researcher. However, I did not have to protect my own rights as a teacher to the extent that I did for the teacher in Phase A, since I had willingly instigated this investigation.

I already set out how important I believed it was to guarantee the participants' anonymity in Phase A. In this phase, I was therefore not able to analyse the data in tandem with collecting them, since the participants were writing about me as an L2 teacher. Therefore, I made sure the participants knew that the data being collected was not going to be analysed till after the end of the school year, (May 2007), by which time all their grades had been officially recorded in school records. Therefore, the participants did not have to worry that critical comments about me as the L2 teacher, the course, and/ or the school, might affect their grades, and/ or their position in this school. In addition, I was not going to be their L2 teacher in the next academic year so neither did they have to worry about any long-term implications. Therefore, as mentioned in the section on data gathering techniques in Phase A, I had to drop the stimulated-recall interview, (3.1.4.5), for this reason, regardless of how successful it could possibly have been.

All data collected were kept in a locked cupboard in the L2 classroom, to which only two student representatives had the key till the end of the school year, (May '07).

All data would be destroyed in due course. As per Phase A, the same procedures were followed with regards to the informed consent form, **(Appendix 1)**, information sheet, **(Appendix 2)**, and the summary of the investigation, **(Appendix 3)**.



### **3.2.7 The Conclusion (Phase A and Phase B)**

This research design enabled me to build up “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, 1983) about how motivation played out over time, in L2 classrooms in this context, from the perspective of teenagers, (research-oriented), by looking at L2 motivation through a different window from the more traditional approaches, and thus tried to illuminate the more situation-specific aspect. In addition, this research design afforded me an opportunity to reflect upon how to refine, and improve my professional practice to support L2 learners in this specific context, (action-oriented).

Given its qualitative focus, my measures were judged not by reliability, generalisability, and/ or validity which are of paramount importance to quantitative measures, but rather by “comparability, translatability, dependability, and confirmability” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I hoped that the characteristics of the participants had been delineated so clearly that they could serve as a basis for comparison with other like, and/ or unlike groups. This is known as “comparability” (Wolcott, 1973; Rosenblatt, 1981; Borman, LeCompte & Goetz, 1986). In this instance, that would be the other L2 learners in the many different contexts that were mentioned in 1.5.

I hoped that my research methods, analytic categories, and characteristics of L2 motivational phenomena had also been identified so explicitly that they could be used meaningfully, across different L2 research contexts. This corresponded



to external validity or generalisability, in conventional quantitative research, and is known as “translatability” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I ensured that triangulation of data was a key feature of my research design in order to provide “checks and balances” about the elusive construct of motivation. This was analogous to reliability in quantitative research, and given the complex nature of the construct of L2 motivation, it seemed a sensible thing to do. Some may argue that this eschewed the notion of multiple realities, but as I stated before, it was important to seek to understand these multiple realities, since the investigation had an action-orientation. “Dependability” was therefore established (Yin, 1994).

Finally, data methods were documented in detail, and an “audit” trail of data was provided in order that readers could make a judgment about this investigation’s “authenticity”, and “trustworthiness”. “Confirmability” (Miles & Huberman, 1984) was therefore established.

In sum, the weakness of my research design was possibly that it did not offer any opportunity to generalise from my findings. However, its strengths may have been the following: Firstly, research methods were able to develop alongside research content, and there was the opportunity to alternate between action, and critical reflection, about not only the data collected, but also the methods utilised. As mentioned, each spiral of action afforded me the opportunity to test my interpretations further, not only about my findings, but also about my research methods. Secondly, it afforded me two shots in which to understand how L2 motivation played out over time, with two different sets of participants, in the same context. Thirdly, it enabled me to contribute

to knowledge about L2 motivation in research terms, as well as practical terms. Fourthly, given how long I had worked in the field, (7 months), it had a high level of credibility, (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Ultimately, we might have to accept that there are different types of research conducted for different purposes, and audiences. And, as Bartlett & Burton (2006) stated “if this is the case, then different research designs, strategies and methods of data collection need to be seen as appropriate” (p. 397).

## **Chapter 4 The Findings (Research-oriented)**

### **4.1 The Overview**

This chapter sets out the findings from Phase A and B, about the “predecisional” stage of L2 motivation, (4.2), and the “postdecisional” stage, (4.3). In fact, my view was that the above mentioned two stages of L2 motivation, whilst needing to be investigated separately, also went “hand in hand”, and therefore at the end of the section on the “postdecisional” stage, I commented upon the relationship between these two stages. After all, it seemed of fundamental importance in research terms to seek to understand how the participants’ “motivational rhetoric”, played out in the reality of L2 classrooms, from their perspective.

In this chapter, Phase A’s findings are set out first, and then compared and contrasted with Phase B’s. As outlined in the research design, the iterative approach adopted, afforded me the opportunity to test out whether my initial findings about how motivation played out over time in Phase A, remained the same in Phase B, with a different set of participants, in the same context. Where possible, the findings are also linked to empirical research, set out in the literature review. In addition, I also reflected upon to what extent the theories analysed in the literature review, were reflected in the phenomena demonstrated in these L2 classrooms, where possible. Two other sections about the construct of motivation, and the multiple realities surrounding it, (4.4), as well as general methodological issues about motivation, (4.5), are also set out.

As mentioned in the research design, the reporting of the evaluation of the data collection techniques was done in **Chapter 3**. In addition, it must be noted by the reader that the findings of Phase B are more in-depth, and insightful than Phase A's, due to the iterative nature of the research design. In addition, it should also be noted that the set of participants in Phase A were categorised as "average to less than average" whereas the set of participants in Phase B were categorised as "average to above average", at the outset. (These categorisations were explained in 3.1.5). Therefore, interesting comparisons, and contrasts could be made between the first, and second set of participants. It is important to also note at the outset, that when I refer to an individual participant as "better performing" or "weaker", this is always then defined in terms of their grades in relation to others, in their specific class. In all the tables throughout this chapter, where necessary, female participants are shown in *italics*, and male participants in normal typeface.



## **4.2 The “Predecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation**

### **4.2.1 The “Predecisional” Stage (Phase A and Phase B)**

This section presents the results about the more general aspects of L2 motivation, (cognitions), that the participants brought to the L2 classrooms. The first set of findings was collected from Questionnaire 1, (Appendix A), (Phase A and Phase B). *Tables 4.1*, and *4.2* set out the data collected, about both sets of the participants’ “choice” motivation, thus answering Question 1, (Phase A), (3.1.2).

Table 4.1: The Participants’ “Choice” Motivation (Phase A)

Name	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jenny	Very Important	Integrative and Instrumental	An average amount	Yes, it helps improve my English.	Yes, I can get to know people with different languages.	5
Linda	Very Important	Integrative and Instrumental	An average amount	Yes, it helps me learn more English.	Yes, I can make friends with people from different countries.	5
Ken	Very Important	Integrative and Instrumental	An average amount	Yes, it gives me many advantages.	Yes, it helps me study many cultures around the world.	5
Fumiko	Very Important	Integrative and Instrumental	The most effort possible	It is difficult for me, but I learn a lot of topics.	I like it. It is interesting. It is changing my world and my future highly.	4
Edward	Very Important	Instrumental	The most effort possible	No, it’s strange for me.	It seems good, but I don’t like; a big and sudden change for me.	3
Akiyo	Important	Integrative and Instrumental	The most effort possible	I like English. It is my favourite subject so I don’t mind doing other lessons in English.	Yes, because I like to learn about other country’s history, culture etc.	3
Tom	Important	Instrumental	Quite a bit of effort	It is too difficult for me to understand.	Yes, I do.	3
Chan	Important	Instrumental	The most effort possible	No, I not understand.	No, I don’t.	2
Bobby	Very Important	Instrumental	The most effort possible	No, it is hard for me.	No, I do not.	2
Lola	Important	Instrumental	An average amount of effort	Yes, I can know more things.	It is an interesting experience.	2

**Key:**

- 1: How important is it for you to become proficient in English?
  - 2: Integrative and/ or integrative orientation?
  - 3: How much effort do you put into learning English?
  - 4: Do you like learning other subjects in English?
  - 5: Do you like learning in an international environment?
  - 6: Grade at end of the learning period: 7 being “excellent” to 1 being “poor”:
- 3 is a pass.

**Table 4.2: The Participants' Choice Motivation (Phase B)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Georgie	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Instrumental</i>	<i>An average amount</i>	<i>Yes, because English is the international language of Arts and Science.</i>	<i>I am learning how to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds and that relates to my career.</i>	7
Sue	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>An average amount</i>	<i>I like learning in English, I learn many new words and feel good.</i>	<i>I can hear many different accents of English which will help me further in my career.</i>	6
Tiffany	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>It's very tough but useful.</i>	<i>Yes, because my English is improving a lot and fast.</i>	6
June	<i>Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>Quite a bit of effort</i>	<i>Yes, because I get original knowledge.</i>	<i>I can make many foreign friends.</i>	6
Derek	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>Quite a bit of effort</i>	<i>By learning other subjects in English, I can improve my English.</i>	<i>I can learn about many different cultures and make friends from many different races.</i>	6
Jack	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>The best texts in the world on Law and Economics are written in English, so I like it.</i>	<i>It is a good stage for me on which I can improve my English.</i>	6
Min Sung	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>It's more interesting learning other subjects in English than Korean.</i>	<i>I can interact with different cultures.</i>	6
Dong Hyub	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>I like studying the subjects in English, it is helpful.</i>	<i>I can really improve my second language in this international environment.</i>	6
Brian	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative</i>	<i>An average amount</i>	<i>It is good for improving my English skills.</i>	<i>Yes, I can improve my English, especially speaking.</i>	6
Midori	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>Yes, because I learn lots of words from other subjects.</i>	<i>I like to learn about foreign cultures and I can meet many foreign students.</i>	5
Anne	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>Yes, because I can practise my English.</i>	<i>Wide range of friendships and I will learn to build good relationships with different types of people.</i>	5
Yoon	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Instrumental</i>	<i>An average amount of effort</i>	<i>Yes, it is interesting and I learn a lot.</i>	<i>I like it because I can experience many kinds of culture and this is good for my future.</i>	5
Akio	<i>Important</i>	<i>Integrative and Instrumental</i>	<i>The most effort possible</i>	<i>It is better to learn in English than Japanese.</i>	<i>I can learn about other people's culture and history. Communication will be different and I can learn more English.</i>	5

**Key:**

1: How important is it for you to become proficient in English?

2: Integrative and/ or integrative orientation?

3: How much effort do you put into learning English?

4: Do you like learning other subjects in English?

5: Do you like learning in an international environment?

6: Grade at end of the learning period: 7 being "excellent" to 1 being "poor":

3 is a pass.



Finding 1: The second set of participants reported to value English more highly than the first set of participants.

With regards to the first set of participants, these data suggested that it was “important” for all participants, and “very important” for 6/10 participants, to become proficient in English. With regards to the second set of participants, these data suggested that it was “important” for all participants, and “very important” for 11/13 participants to become proficient in English, showing that they seemed to value English more highly than the first set of participants, (see *Tables 4.1, and 4.2*). This finding initially appeared very positive, given that research has shown that the value that students place on English could be a significant influence on their level of L2 motivation, as set out in 2.3.

Finding 2: The participants in this context were predominantly both instrumentally and integratively oriented. However, the worst performing males in the first set, and the best performing female in the second set reported to be solely instrumentally oriented.

With regard to the first set of participants, *Table 4.1* shows that the value that English had, (particularly for the worst performing male participants), was pragmatic, and instrumental. English seemed to be predominantly regarded as a “means to an end”. In fact, there was only one male participant, (Ken from Vietnam), who appeared to be both integratively, and instrumentally oriented, the rest being instrumentally oriented. On the other hand, the majority of the female participants seemed to be both integratively, and instrumentally oriented, with the exception of one female participant, Lola, who cited only instrumental reasons, (her future career). They predominantly cited that they were interested in language, and culture, as well as having, and/ or making friends from different countries. However, significantly, more



of their reasons were instrumental than integrative, (typically five to one). With regards to the second set of participants, *Table 4.2* illustrated that 10/13 participants reported to have both integrative, and instrumental orientations, whilst 2/13 were solely instrumentally oriented, (this included the top performing female in the class), and 1/13 participants was solely integratively oriented, (see 4.2.2 for more in-depth data about this issue).

Perhaps it was necessary for the majority of these participants to be oriented in both integrative, and instrumental ways in this increasingly globalised, and competitive world. Gardner & Lambert's (1972) postulation that an integrative orientation may be required to sustain the long-term motivation necessary for the demanding task of language learning, (2.2.1), might be the case with regards to the first set of participants, in this instance, in light of the fact that all males with only instrumental orientation got poor grades at the end of the quarter, (*Table 4.1*). However, it is out of line with regards to the second set of participants.

Finding 3: The participants reported to value English highly, but did not necessarily report to put in a lot of effort.

What was puzzling was that given some of the previous views about the importance of becoming proficient in English, and the value of English, it might be fair to assume that these participants would subsequently put in a lot of effort, given the background of the Asian learner studying in an international school in Singapore, (as discussed in 1.1). With regards to the first set of participants, in response to effort put into English, only 5/10 participants reported to put in "the most effort possible", another participant, (1/10), put in "quite a bit", and a further 4/10 participants put in

“an average amount”, (*Table 4.1*). With regards to the second set of participants, it was also surprising to note that only 7/13 participants reported to be putting in the “most effort possible”, 2/13 participants put in “quite a bit”, and a further 4/13 participants put in an “average amount”, (*Table 4.2*). So, even if students really value English, they may still not put in what they perceive to be the most effort possible, as is documented by Hufton et al. (2002), as set out in 2.3. These participants in this context might be out of step with the American Asian learners described in 2.3 by Stevenson & Lee (1990), Stevenson & Stigler (1992) and Steinberg (1996) who regarded effort as more important than ability, and subsequently put in a lot of effort and had desirable attributional styles. These data therefore highlighted the overwhelming importance of always taking into account differences between contexts. Of course, these data also showed that it is important not to assume that everyone will interpret “effort”, and “ability” in exactly the same way, regardless of ethnicity or culture, as outlined in 2.3. In fact, these data illustrated that effort was very much a qualitative construct. For example, a poor performing student in the first set of participants, (Bobby), reported to put in “the most effort possible”, whereas the top performing student in the second set of participants, (Georgie), reported to put in only “an average amount”. For one participant, what seems “an average amount” may be “a lot” for another, (see further discussion on this complicated methodological issue in 4.5).

However, what was positive, in methodological terms, was that most of the participants seemed to be able to report on the anomaly identified in this section, (that is, whilst they could see the importance of effort, they still might not necessarily put in the most effort possible, by their own admission), thus contributing to the

discussion about the extent to which individuals can access their self-knowledge, and thereby motivational variables, as introduced in 2.1.

Finding 4: The second set of participants reported to be more comfortable, and at ease with studying in English in an international school environment than the first set of participants.

With regards to the first set of participants, some found it uncomfortable studying through the medium of English in this context, although they could see the value. For example, the majority of the males had ambivalent feelings. One male participant stated:

“It seems good, but I don’t like, (studying in English). Because it is a big sudden change in my life. Everything is different” (from Russian school).

Edward, 16, Mongolia.

And,

“I do not like it, (studying English in this school), because that is so difficult to understand”.

Tom, 16, Taiwan.



Only one male participant had positive comments and stated that:

“I like it (learning in an international school) because it helps me improve my English. I can study many cultures in the world. I will have many friends from many cultures in the world. I will be more confident”.

Ken, 16, Vietnam.

However, one other male participant stated that although the main reason he was learning English in an international school was because of money, he also said that:

“I think it will be a shame if we don’t speak English in this century”.

Edward, 16, Mongolia.

Even so, with regards to the male participants, instrumental motivation and pragmatism were never far from the surface. As one said:

“Yes, because need these subjects to get money”.

Chan, 17, Taiwan.

On the other hand, the female participants in the first set seemed to have a more positive attitude to studying through the medium of English, in this context. For example, one participant stated:



“Yes, I do, (like studying in this school), because I want to study as more subjects in English as possible so my English will improve”.

Jenny, 17, Vietnam.

Another stated:

“I like learning in an international environment because I can mention lots of things. It is changing my world and future highly”.

Fumiko, 16, Japan.

And:

“Because an international environment, I will have more opportunity to contact with many peoples who are different language and country with me, so that I can understand more about their culture and will talk by English, so my English will improve.”

Jenny, 17, Vietnam.

With regard to the data from the males in this first set of participants, these provided evidence of the complex inner struggle that some individuals face between the rhetoric, and the reality of L2 learning. These data might therefore be in line with what Norton Pierce (1995) identified in her research about immigrant women in Canada. She noted that even if individuals could see the value of English, that did not necessarily mean they enjoyed the language learning process, and continually capitalised on all opportunities to learn, and use English. With regard to the second set

of participants, data showed that they did not have the same ambivalent, and contradictory attitude towards studying English, and in fact were very comfortable, and at ease with learning through the medium of English in this context. They valued English highly, and this subsequently translated into a very positive learning experience in the international school context, (see 4.2.5 for more in-depth data).

In sum, these data illustrated some tensions, and contradictions between the value, and the importance of English on the one hand, but on the other, the difficulties getting used to, and adapting to, actually learning, and communicating in English in an international school for some participants, who did not perform well in grades.

In addition, further in-depth data related to the second set of participants were also collected through a series of four 500-word essays about key L2 themes, **(Appendix B)**, (Phase B), and presented in *Tables 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9*. These illustrated the second set of participants' sets of beliefs, and values that they brought with them to the classroom, and shed light upon four important L2 motivational themes, which were not fully accessed, with regards to the first set of participants. These four key themes were: the reasons why the participants valued English, (the "Do I want to do it?" aspect of L2 motivation), how satisfied they were with their level of proficiency in English, (the "Can I do it?" aspect of L2 motivation), whether they viewed effort or ability as being more important, in relation to learning English, and finally did they like studying in this international context. These data answered Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, (Phase B), **(3.2.1)**.

These data illuminated this set of participants' cognitions in a much clearer way than the first set of participants, and provided powerful insights into not only what these participants were thinking about key L2 motivational issues, but more importantly, the underlying reasons why they came to think this way, thus illuminating the powerful influences of the broader culture, and society, on the ways in which they thought, which was a finding which had been extensively documented by other empirical research, set out in 2.3.

#### **4.2.2 The Value of English to the Second Set of Participants**

In-depth data about how, and in what ways the participants valued English were accessed through the first essay of Phase B, (Appendix B). *Table 4.3* provides the results in rank order, from most important to least important theme/ category, with numbers, (to show weightings), and examples. Ten themes/ categories emerged, which were predominantly instrumental in orientation. These data answered Question 1, (Phase B), (3.2.1).



***Table 4.3: The Value of English to the Participants (Phase B)***

Theme	Number	Examples
1) English is a valuable and powerful language	55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An essential language.</li> <li>- An official language.</li> <li>- The world's no. 1 language.</li> <li>- The most important language.</li> <li>- Exists in all aspects of our lives: politics, economy, social and cultural.</li> <li>- An important tool of communication used on the international stage.</li> <li>- A good language for expressing ideas, feelings and opinions -English is spoken in UK and US, (the native language).</li> <li>- In Singapore and India it is an official language and they use English to unite people of different races or ethnic groups.</li> </ul>
2) Can communicate with others	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The only language in which we can communicate with all the students in the international school.</li> <li>- I can communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.</li> <li>- If a person cannot communicate in English, they will face severe problems in the future.</li> <li>- English is a bridge on which I can find common themes to interact with strangers from different countries.</li> </ul>
3) English will make me successful (in life)	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English will help me survive in a very competitive future.</li> <li>- Will help me do better in life.</li> <li>- Will help me accomplish more of what I want to.</li> <li>- Speaking another language makes me mentally smart.</li> <li>- Makes me different from others in my country.</li> </ul>
4) English will help me get a good career	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I will be better paid.</li> <li>- Can be useful when I grow up and am looking for a good career.</li> <li>- If I apply for a good job in Korea, it (English) is essential.</li> <li>- I can represent my company on the international stage.</li> <li>- In our jobs we will have to make presentations in professional meetings in English.</li> </ul>
5) English gives me access to important information and knowledge	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We live in a global village, and millions of people are using the internet in English.</li> <li>- The Internet is written in the universal language, (English).</li> <li>- Books, publications and newspapers are printed in English.</li> <li>- Students constantly share ideas in English in informal conversations.</li> <li>- The latest information is always updated in English....I was amazed that the news of the earthquake in Taiwan was broadcast all around the world in English.</li> </ul>
6) English will help me travel around the world	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- English is the passport for traveling.</li> <li>- World has become a kind of "English world".</li> </ul>
7) English will help me study in a good school and/ or university	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If I want to go to a top university around the world, I have to have high English skills.</li> <li>- Many leading universities are in the US or UK.</li> </ul>
8) Negatives in my own country	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chinese government and Western media will give opposite viewpoints on the same event, that's why I need to know English.</li> <li>- I do not like the English classes in China.</li> <li>- Korea's educational system is not suitable for learning English</li> </ul>
9) Parental Pressure	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In China/ Korea many parents want children to learn English.</li> <li>- My parents want me to learn English well.</li> </ul>
10) Societal Pressure	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better looked at by other people, if I can speak English well.</li> <li>- So many people all around the world want to learn English, I must try hard.</li> <li>- I cannot afford to lag behind others (by not learning English).</li> </ul>
	181 comments	

Table 4.3 shows that the most frequently cited theme was that English was a “passport to success” in life. English was described as “essential”, “valuable”, “a no. one language”, an “official” language, the “global” language, and the “most important” language. Most of the categories that emerged appeared to be more instrumental in orientation than integrative. In fact, to use Norton Pierce’s (1995)

terminology as introduced in 2.3, these categories seemed to be predominantly related to increasing the participants' value in a "material", as opposed to a "symbolic" way, thus illustrating that students with good grades might not always be fully integratively oriented, as postulated by Gardner (1985) and the social psychological research tradition, as discussed in 2.2.1.

Furthermore, the second most frequently cited theme was that English was not only an important tool of communication with other students, but also with people from different cultural backgrounds from all over the world. This finding highlighted the increasingly globalised nature of the world, in which individuals are not merely learning English to "be like", or "integrate with", a particular group of native speakers as postulated by the social psychological research tradition, as discussed in 2.2.1. In fact, this idea might be an increasingly outdated notion.

The third, fourth, and seventh most frequently cited themes all related to being successful in life, that is, successful in general, in school, and/ or university and in their future career. English would make them different from others, and hence enable them to "do better" in life, and survive in a future which looked very competitive. As one male participant stated:

"Do you want to succeed and have successful life? Then study and learn English for your life!"

Brian, 17, Korea.



The fifth most frequently cited theme was that English gave them access to important information, and knowledge through the Internet, newspapers and, foreign news reports etc. These were interesting, and unexpected data, which may not be reflected in other empirical research at this point in time. More research needs to be conducted about this issue, because perhaps it might eventually be a good idea to consider including some questions in the traditional L2 quantitative measuring instruments, discussed in 2.2.1, about whether an individual is motivated to learn English in order to access more information, and knowledge.

The sixth most frequently cited category was that English would help the participants as they travelled all over the world, which illustrated their instrumental orientation.

The eighth most frequently cited theme was negatives in the participants' own countries, for example, the education system, (in China/ Korea/ Japan), which they perceived to be not suitable for learning English. In addition, some students reported that a country's media sometimes gave a very different version of events from the Western media, and that is why they needed to know English. In fact, these data showed that perceived negatives may actually be highly motivating influences, and this lends further support to the view that if researching about L2 motivation, we should always look at the positive, and the negative, side by side, as discussed in 1.3. Perhaps it would therefore be a good idea to conduct further research about this key influence, and eventually consider including some questions about perceived negatives as motivating influences in the traditional L2 measuring instruments.

Finally, parental, and societal pressure made up the final two themes, illustrating how the participants were influenced by not only their families, but also, by cultural norms, societal expectations, and attitudes. These findings were in line with other empirical research which has also shown the powerful influence of the family (Gardner, 1985), and how socio-cultural values can mediate achievement, cognition and behaviour (Phalet & Lens, 1995) as set out in 2.3. It is clearly important not to underestimate the complex effects of the family, and the broader culture on individuals' L2 motivation.



### 4.2.3 The Second Set of Participants' Perceived Proficiency in English

Further in-depth data were accessed through the second essay, (Appendix B), (Phase B), about how this “Do I want to do it?” aspect of L2 motivation, (4.2.2), linked with the “Can I do it aspect?” This illustrated how these participants had extremely critical opinions about their own proficiency level, in not only general terms, but also in relation to the four key skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. These data were surprising, given that all of these participants could be considered to be performing well in their L2 course, (*Table 4.2*). *Tables 4.4*, and *4.5* set out the participants' views about how satisfied they were with their proficiency in general, and more specifically, in relation to the four key skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, respectively. These data answered Question 2, (Phase B), (3.2.1).

Table 4.4: The Participants' Level of Satisfaction with their General Proficiency in English (Phase B)

Name	Satisfied or Not satisfied	Comment	Grade at the end of the semester
Georgie	Not Satisfied	-Although my standard is above the average of my age group I am still not satisfied. My goal is to know English like a first language person.	7
Sue	Satisfied	-Gradually my English has improved. In Grade 9 I couldn't even talk. I am very happy with my proficiency now.	6
Tiffany	Not Satisfied	-I have got problems with my English. I need to do more self-criticism.	6
June	Not Satisfied	-I have made progress since studying here, but I am still not happy with my proficiency in English.	6
Derek	Not Satisfied	-I have always thought that my proficiency in English needs to improve.	6
Jack	Not Satisfied	-I try to face everything in my life in a positive way, but I still feel frustrated about my poor English, especially listening.	6
Min Sung	Satisfied	-After studying English for almost a year now, I am quite satisfied with my English skills in the 4 areas.	6
Dong Hyub	Not Satisfied	-Although I have reached a certain proficiency I still have a long way to go to reach the level of English I desire.	6
Brian	Not Satisfied	-My English skills are better than many of my peers, (of the same nationality), however, I am still not satisfied with my proficiency. My goal is to be as good as a native speaker.	6
Midori	Not Satisfied	-I am not happy with my proficiency. My friend told me that I will improve after 6 months. This is not true for me.	5
Anne	Not Satisfied	-I don't know how to answer because there is no limit to knowledge. Even though my English is good enough, I think there must be something more to learn and anyway I feel my English is poor. I am not happy with my English proficiency.	5
Yoon	Not Satisfied	-When I was in Korea I thought my English was good, now I am in Singapore I discovered that my English is not very good at all.	5
Akio	Not Satisfied	-I am not happy with my proficiency. I have more weak abilities than strong. My goal is to be more skilled in my weak areas.	5

**\*\* Grade at end of the semester: 7 being “excellent” to 1 being “poor”:**

3 is a pass.

Table 4.5: Are the Participants Satisfied with their Proficiency in the Four Key Skills Areas: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening? (Phase B)

Name	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
Georgie	No	No	No	Yes
Sue	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tiffany	Yes	No	No	Yes
June	No	No	No	No
Derek	Yes	No	No	Yes
Jack	No	No	Yes	No
Min Sung	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Dong Hyub	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Brian	No	No	Yes	Yes
Midori	No	Yes	No	No
Anne	No	No	No	No
Yoon	Yes	No	No	Yes
Akio	No	No	Yes	Yes
No:	7	10	7	6
Yes:	6	3	6	7

Finding 5: Students with good grades will not necessarily report to be satisfied with their perceived proficiency.

With regards to their perceived proficiency, *Table 4.4* shows that only 2/13 participants were satisfied with their general proficiency. In fact, the highest performing female participant reported that she was not satisfied with her proficiency, although she got a Grade 7, (A\*: the highest score possible), thus also highlighting the qualitative nature of proficiency. Perhaps these data supported Zimmerman, Bandura & Martinez-Pons’ (1992) postulation that the more capable the students judge themselves to be, the more challenging goals they embrace, as set out in 2.2.4. In many cases, the participants cited that they wanted to speak perfect English, like a native-speaker. Research has shown that individuals’ sense of competence is a powerful influence on their motivation, as introduced in 2.3, but this finding showed that a lack of satisfaction with one’s perceived competence could also be a powerful influence on L2 motivation.



More specifically, with regards to their views on their proficiency in the four skills areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, *Table 4.5* shows that the participants were most dissatisfied with their writing, (10/13), followed by reading, and speaking, (7/13 for both), followed by listening, (6/13). With regards to writing, the negative influence of grades, and marks was underlined. One female participant who was not one of the highest performers in this set stated:

“When I write I am worried about making mistakes- the only time I write in English is doing my homework, and homework is connected to marks, marks connected to report cards, and reports cards connected to entering university”.

Yoon, 17, Korea.

These data also showed that the participants were constantly comparing themselves with foreigners, native speakers, and also their peers.

For example, one male participant stated:

“There are many foreigners who can speak as good as native speakers, that is why I am not satisfied”.

Derek, 16, Korea.



And another said:

“I am better than other Korean students but these Koreans are not my only rivals. I am competing with students from all over the world”.

Dong Hyub, 16, Korea.

Surprisingly, these data also indirectly illuminated that these participants did have goals, which tentatively contradicted certain research findings that young learners, (especially teenagers), in institutionalised learning environments may not have clear and specific goals, as suggested by Brophy (1998), Pintrich & Schunk (1996) and Ushioda (1998), as discussed in 2.3. *Table 4.6* sets out their broad and eclectic range of goals.

*Table 4.6: The Participants’ Goals (Phase B)*

Type of Goal	Number	Examples
To overcome perceived negatives in relation to proficiency	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- My goal is to improve my listening and understanding.</li><li>- To solve my specific problems before Grade 12.</li><li>- To be much more fully proficient in English.</li></ul>
General Goals	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- My goal is to express my thoughts or ideas in English in a clear and concise and effortless way.</li></ul>
Intrinsic Goals	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Somebody in my class said we just need to know English to get good grades in our courses, but I don’t think so. My goals is to talk like a native speaker.</li></ul>
Goals related to affective aspects of language learning	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I am always nervous at presentations in English. My goal is to speak fluently and calmly.</li><li>- My goal is to cultivate more bravery and start speaking English more in class.</li></ul>
Specific Goals	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- My goal is to learn more vocab.</li><li>- My goal is to read newspapers.</li></ul>
Total	20 goals	

Finding 6: This set of participants did have goals.

Interestingly, data also emerged naturally about the participants' goals. Although, I had not asked about them specifically, the majority of participants started to write about them in their own ways, hence a range of goals on a continuum from the specific, to the more general was accessed, (*Table 4.6*). Clearly, although they were in an institutionalised learning environment, and had no choice but to learn through the medium of English, they still shaped their own goals to a certain extent. What was of great interest was that many goals cited were related to the participants' perceived weaknesses, not their strengths, thus illustrating how high performing students may focus on improvement, and therefore wish to become more self-efficacious.

#### 4.2.4 The Second Set of Participants' Views on the "Effort Versus Ability" L2 Motivational Debate

In-depth data about how much effort these participants put into learning English, and also what was their position on the "effort versus ability" key L2 motivational debate were accessed through the third essay, (Phase B), (Appendix B). *Table 4.7* sets out an overview of their views on this key L2 motivational debate. These data answered Question 3, (Phase B), (3.2.1).

*Table 4.7: The Participants' Beliefs about whether Effort or Ability is more Important with regards to Learning English (Phase B)*

Name	Effort or Ability	Comment	Grade**
Georgie	Effort	-Both are important but if I really have to say it's effort.	7
Sue	Effort	-Effort has the largest importance in our lives. -Someone can be smartest person in the world, but without hard work can't do anything.	6
Tiffany	Effort	-If one student has the ability to study or the capability to succeed, but lacks the effort, he/ she will not achieve his/ her goal.	6
June	Effort	-Cannot say that ability does not play a small part but effort is still more important than ability.	6
Derek	Effort	-This does not mean that ability is out of the picture, but effort is more important, (70% effort and 30% ability).	6
Jack	Effort	-Ability is built by effort.	6
Min Sung	Effort	-Effort is more essential than ability.	6
Dong Hyub	Effort	-A lot of people seem to make the comment that one has to be "naturally talented" to learn the language well. However, I do not believe this because I think if one is really hard working and willing to put in the extra hours, they will do just as well, if not better than those who think they are "talented" and hence do not put in any effort at all.	6
Brian	Ability	-Ability is much more effective than effort.	6
Midori	Effort	-I think effort is much more important when I am learning English because if I have brilliant ability, I will not work so hard and therefore I cannot apply this ability.	5
Anne	Effort	-Both are important but if I really have to say, effort.	5
Yoon	Effort	-Effort is the most important thing but that is not to say that ability is not important.	5
Akio	Effort	-Even if you have some ability it comes to nothing without making effort.	5

\*\* Grade at end of the semester: 7 being "excellent" to 1 being "poor":

3 is a pass.



Finding 7: The majority of these participants reported to view effort as more important than ability, with regards to learning English.

*Table 4.7* shows that 12/13 participants viewed effort as more important than ability, and this included one European female participant from Serbia, but excluded one male participant from Korea, who viewed ability as more important. This was a very positive finding given the future action-oriented aspect of my investigation because it showed that students in this context might predominantly have what Dweck (2006) described in her recent research as a “growth mindset”, as opposed to a “fixed” mindset, which is clearly a more positive motivational orientation, as discussed in 2.3.

Finding 8: These participants’ ways of thinking about this key motivational issue had been influenced by aspects of their society, and culture.

What was of particular note was that these data showed the extent to which the participants had been influenced by their broader society, and culture, not only through their previous educational experiences, but also from absorbing into their own “mindset”, examples of individuals who were considered outstanding role-models in their culture, and also further examples from their own learning experiences with their peers in school, thus supporting Menard-Warwick’s (2005) view that L2 learners are not “ahistorical blank-canvas” when they come to the classroom, as set out in 2.3.

With regards to their previous educational experiences, 6/13 participants quoted Thomas Alva Edison, and stated that, “Genius is 1% inspiration but 99% perspiration”, thus providing an example of the powerful influence of their past educational experience on the ways they thought. Interestingly, a Chinese participant



attributed the same quote to Einstein. Furthermore, a Taiwanese participant who had obviously been taught about Einstein in great detail, stated:

“A genius is often a talented person who has done all their homework, for example, like Albert Einstein. He was from a normal family and was not so clever, in fact, he could not even speak when he was three, and did not talk in primary school and middle school, and he could not learn anything well. His father lost hope. But only when he found something in which he was interested and spent a lot of time making effort, he became a famous thinker. He worked very hard”.

Georgie, 15, Taiwan.

With regards to outstanding role models that they had clearly learned about in their country of origin, examples were given of a Professor from the Chinese Army, Daolong Zhu, who only started studying English at 65, and became the top translator in China by the time he was 70 years old, through sheer hard work. In addition, a Korean participant gave the example of Hong, Jung Wook, the President of the Korean Herald newspaper, who was an object of ridicule in school because of his poor English, but he studied hard in Korea, and went on to study at Harvard University, USA. Further tales from Korean folklore included a story about two brothers who were “black sheep” in the Korean educational system, but studied so hard at Harvard University, USA, that when interviewed by the press in Korea, one of them stated:

“Genius cannot beat the idiot who exerts all their efforts”.

Derek, 16, Korea.

With regards to learning experiences with their own peer groups, examples were given to illustrate the importance of effort. For example, many comments were made about “talented” friends who made no effort, and did badly at the end of courses.

Further interesting insights were gleaned into the way the participants were thinking. For example, one participant stated:

“Any British person can speak English, so why can’t we?”

June, 17, China.

One participant also stated that since all babies were born with the ability to learn their own language, and also foreign languages, effort must be more important than ability.

As mentioned, only one participant, (1/13), stated that ability was more important than effort. He stated that:

“All people have different levels of ability, for example, some people are better at learning Maths, or are good at learning Art or Music. English is the same. In fact, I progressed faster than my peers when I started learning English because of my innate language ability”.

Brian, 17, Korea.

In sum, what was of particular interest with regards to these data was that although the participants predominantly perceived effort to be more important than ability, they all still did not, (by their own admission), put in the “most effort possible”, (*Table 4.2*).

4.2.5 The Second Set of Participants’ Views on the Advantages and/ or Disadvantages of Studying in an International School

In-depth data were accessed about the advantages, and disadvantages that the participants reported with regards to studying through English in an international school through the fourth essay, (Appendix B). Tables 4.8, and 4.9 provide the results in rank order with numbers, (to show weightings), of both the advantages, and disadvantages respectively, from the most important to the least important theme/ category. Eight themes/ categories emerged for the advantages, and five themes for the disadvantages. These data answered Question 4, (Phase B), (3.2.1).

Table 4.8: The Participants’ Views about The Advantages of Studying in an International School (Phase B)

Advantage	Number	Examples
1) Can learn and/ or improve English	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All lessons are taught in English, which is perfect for me.</li><li>- To be successful, I need lots of knowledge of English.</li></ul>
2) Can make friends and communicate with students from different nationalities and cultures	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- An opportunity to learn to build good relationships with different nationalities.</li></ul>
3) Can learn about different cultures	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I can learn about different qualities of nationalities, for example, the hard-working spirit of the Japanese, the group-working spirit of the Koreans and the creativity of the Americans.</li></ul>
4) “Superior” teaching methods/ways of thinking	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Different views allow us to question and the more answers we get, the greater our knowledge builds.</li></ul>
5) School facilities	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lots of equipment for science and lots of computers.</li></ul>
6) Can promote my country to foreigners	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Can share good thing about my culture with foreigners.</li></ul>
7) Can learn to overcome my prejudices	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Even if I initially hated one culture, I learned to find good news of that culture and not hate that group anymore.</li></ul>
8) Not strict	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Not strict.</li></ul>
Total	99 comments	



Table 4.9: The Participants' Views about the Disadvantages of Studying in an International School (Phase B)

Disadvantage	Number	Examples
1) Difficulties adapting to the teaching Methods/ Ways of Thinking	19	- The teacher asked us to understand the Maths and not copy. One day, I forgot and I was copying from the board, (like in Korea), and the teacher got really angry.
2) Problems with Cultural Issues	17	- Chinese students ridiculed Koreans saying Korean culture is based on Chinese culture and we did not agree and got angry.
3) Loss of my mother tongue and national identity	9	- A Korean boy I know has been studying in an international school for 14 years, and he has not used the Korean language and now does not know anything about Korea.
4) Too expensive for my family	8	- Too expensive.
5) Too much responsibility representing my country	3	- Other students are always looking to see what people from my country do, for example, study hard in class.
Total	56 comments	

Finding 9: This set of participants reported that there were many more advantages than disadvantages in studying in an international school.

These participants were, for the most part, entirely comfortable with studying through English in this school, which contrasted with the first set of participants. As one male participant stated:

“Seize the dream of being an international school student”.

Akio, 16, Japan.

For:

“Children have a very fulfilling social life, and enjoy their study in a multi-racial and multi-cultural and modern and highly technological environment”.

Dong Hyub, 16, Korea.

With regards to the advantages, *Table 4.8* illustrates that the most commonly cited one was the opportunity to learn, and/ or improve their English, which again illustrated how highly this second set of participants valued English, supporting data from 4.2.2. The second, and third most commonly cited advantages were related to making friends from different nationalities, and learning about other cultures, thus illuminating their integrative orientation. The fourth most commonly cited advantage was the “superior” teaching methods, and ways of thinking which were based on the IBO philosophy of education. The fifth, and eighth advantages were related to the school, that is, the facilities, and also the fact that it was not “strict”, respectively. The sixth, and seventh advantages were being able to promote their country to foreigners, and learning to overcome their prejudices about foreigners, respectively.

With regards to the disadvantages, *Table 4.9* highlights the most commonly cited one was the difficulties related to adapting to the teaching methods, and ways of thinking. The second most commonly cited one was related to problems related to cultural issues. The third has been widely documented in linguistic research, and was related to the loss of their mother tongue, and/ or national identity. The final two categories were that the school fees were too expensive, and that they felt the burden of having to represent their country to others.

These data showed that further research should be conducted about the pervasive, all-surrounding whole school influence on L2 motivation. As Dornyei (2001) stated, the effects of the atmosphere of the “whole-school” on L2 motivation is of utmost importance, but this line of research is absent from the L2 field (p. 222).

#### **4.2.6 Conclusion about the “Predecisional” Stage (Phase A and Phase B)**

To what extent could Dornyei & Otto's (1998) process model of L2 motivation partly account for my findings about influences in the “predecisional” stage of motivation? Dornyei & Otto (1998) divided the “preactional” stage into three parts: goal setting, intention formation, and initiation of intention enactment. It seemed that it was only the first section that could partly account for my findings. It can be seen from my findings, that individuals' subjective values, and norms that have developed during the past were significant influences. Dornyei & Otto (1998) postulated that these then interplay with incentive values, that is, intrinsic pleasure, and/ or instrumental benefits, and these were reflected in my findings, too, with the focus more on instrumental benefits, in this particular context. Then, they postulated that value preferences can screen out unsuitable wishes, and clearly the participants in this context had many strong values about the importance of learning English to ensure that this was the case. Then, they postulated that the external environment, for example, family, teachers, and school environment may also influence individuals. My findings showed that the participants had been strongly influenced by their family, and their teachers, (in their previous national systems), as well as by the teaching methods, and ways of thinking in this school. In the case of the first set of participants, they were more negatively affected by the school context than the second set.

The second part of the “preactional” stage is the intention formation section. According to Dornyei & Otto (1998), this is when the goal is processed into more than just a goal, and becomes an intention. They postulated that in this stage the individual



becomes influenced by their expectancy of success, the relevance of the goal, their need for achievement and fear of failure, self-determination, and various goal properties. In addition, there is also the influence of learners' beliefs about L2 learning, knowledge of learning strategies, and sufficient domain-specific knowledge. Then, there has to be some sort of urgency. In the case of the participants in this context, the IBO examination requirements could have been not only the sense of urgency, as well as powerful external demands. And Dornyei & Otto (1998) postulated that they must have a unique opportunity, which obviously they did since they were studying in an international school in another country, where they had to learn through the medium of English.

Then there is a third part of this “preactional” stage, which is defined as the initiation of intention enactment. This stage is affected by whether the participants have an action versus state orientation, perceived behavioural control, (but how would they know at this stage?), as well as distracting influences and obstacles, and powerful competing action tendencies.

With regards to these complicated second, and third parts, in this context, it seemed very difficult to access findings to support these influences that were postulated by Dornyei & Otto (1998). Perhaps this may have been because the participants were not in a “genuine” “preactional” stage. Or perhaps it could have been because the theory is too eclectic, and has put together theoretically disparate types of influences. Theoretically, is it a case of less might be more?



In sum, with regards to my findings, even although it was unfortunate that I had not been able to access such in-depth data about the first set of participants' "predecisional" stage as I had with regards to the *second set*, the data still illuminated interesting differences between the two sets of participants. Furthermore, insights were gleaned not only with regards to how the second set of participants were thinking, (their cognitions), but also how these thoughts had been shaped. Given that I aimed to refine, and improve my own professional practice, I had to take into account this "rhetoric", and subsequently compare it to the "reality" of L2 motivation in the actual classrooms at a later stage, before considering how to "act" in light of my findings.

### **4.3 The “Postdecisional” Stage of L2 Motivation**

#### **4.3.1 How L2 Motivation Played out Over Time (Phase A and Phase B)**

If I wanted to eventually refine, and improve my own professional practice, I had to also seek to understand the situation-specific aspect of motivation from the perspective of teenagers. And so, since I wanted to understand how they felt, I did not wish to constrain their meanings, by imposing my meanings about L2 motivation on them.

A good starting point therefore seemed to be to collect base line data about whether they were motivated, or not, over the course of the learning period, thus looking at motivation over time, as opposed to at specific time points. I therefore examined the data from the journals, (**Appendix C**), (Phase A and Phase B), to find out whether the participants were motivated or not, from their perspective. As outlined in my research design, I had previously explained to the participants that motivation was defined as do they want to do things in the classroom.

What came to light from my analysis of the journals was that sometimes the participants were both motivated, and not motivated during the course of one lesson. I therefore created my own coding system to code every lesson, of **O**, (the participants reported to be solely motivated), **OX**, (they reported to be both motivated and not motivated), and **X**, (they reported to be solely not motivated), in order to plot their motivation in the classrooms over time. Some would argue that this is was crude, and simplistic way to plot motivation, but my view was that it helped me visualise how

the participants were feeling in motivational terms, over the whole course of the learning period, and provided useful weight of opinion data, from their perspective.

And, although it could be argued that just because a participant did feel motivated/ did not feel motivated during one or more lessons, did not necessarily mean that they were motivated/ not motivated in general terms towards English, my view was that it was still important to focus upon the motivational quality of the learning experience in the classrooms, because of the action-oriented aspect of my investigation.

Therefore this section presents the results of how L2 motivation played out across the course of the learning period for all participants, (*Tables 4.10, and 4.11*). These data answered Question 5, (Phase B), (3.2.1).

Table 4.10: The Number of Lessons in which the Participants Reported to be Motivated, (O), both Motivated and not Motivated, (OX) , and not Motivated, (X), (Phase A)

Name	O	OX	X	Absent	Total
Bobby	8	3	1	0	12
Linda	7	4	1	0	12
Jenny	6	1	5	0	12
Akiyo	5	4	0	3	12
Ken	5	3	4	0	12
Fumiko	4	5	1	2	12
Edward	4	0	6	2	12
Tom	3	9	0	0	12
Lola	2	6	4	0	12
Chan	2	2	7	1	12
Total	46/112 41%	37/112 33%	29/112 26%	8/120 (7%)	120 lessons



Table 4.11: The Number of Lessons in which the Participants Reported to be Motivated, (O), both Motivated and not Motivated, (OX), and not Motivated, (X), (Phase B)

Name	O	OX	X	Absent	Total
Akio	18	4	2	0	24
Jack	16	4	4	0	24
Yoon	15	7	1	1	24
Min Sung	14	7	2	1	24
Georgie	10	9	4	1	24
Sue	9	6	6	3	24
Anne	8	13	2	1	24
Tiffany	8	10	4	2	24
Dong Hyub	7	15	2	0	24
Brian	7	8	8	1	24
Midori	6	16	2	0	24
Derek	4	19	1	0	24
June	0	18	1	5	24
Total	122/297 41%	136/297 46%	39/297 13%	15/312 (5%)	312 lessons

Finding 10: Motivation in the L2 classrooms was characterised by a degree of flux and volatility, for both sets of participants.

With regards to the first set of participants, they seemed to be particularly sensitive to, and easily influenced by, the events, and happenings in this L2 classroom over the quarter. Their motivation fluctuated on a regular basis in response to these, even within the time-span of one short lesson, hence illuminating the situation-specific volatility of L2 motivation, from their perspective. Each participant participated in up to 12 lessons over the course of the quarter, (*Table 4.10*). This amounted to a total number of 112 lessons for all participants, taking into account the 8 lessons missed in absences. For 46/112 lessons, (41%), the participants reported to be motivated, (O). For 37/112 lessons, (33%), the participants reported to be both motivated and not motivated, (OX). For 29/112 lessons, (26%), the participants reported to be not motivated, (X). Absences accounted for 7% of the total amount of lessons.



With regards to the second set of participants, the data suggested that L2 motivation appeared to be slightly more stable, and less dynamic, fluid, and volatile when compared to the first set, in that although many of these participants were both motivated and not motivated, (OX), on a regular basis in lessons over the course of the semester, (46% of all lessons), it seemed to be in a more predictable trend than for the first set of participants, (see 4.3.3 for full details). Each participant participated in up to 24 lessons over the course of the semester, (*Table 4.11*). This amounted to a total number of 297 lessons after absences were accounted for. For 122/297 lessons, (41%), the participants reported to be motivated, (O). For 136/297 lessons, (46%), the participants reported to be both motivated and not motivated, (OX). For 39/297 lessons, (13%), the participants reported to be not motivated, (X). Absences accounted for 5% of the total amount of lessons. These participants did not experience as many lessons with only negative influences, (13 % of all lessons, versus 26 % of all lessons for the first set of participants). These data may have illustrated that perhaps higher performing language learners, react differently from lower performing ones in the situation-specific context by demonstrating more adaptive L2 motivational orientations.

From the perspective of teenagers, L2 motivation could therefore not be conceptualised as a fixed, static, and trait-like positive entity in the actual classrooms. Interestingly, a subsequent analysis of report cards archived from the school records in this specific context showed that L2 teachers routinely described their students as “motivated”, or “not motivated” as if motivation were a fixed, and static entity in the classrooms.

As mentioned in 2.2.1, Gardner (2001) has been investigating the extent to which measures from his ATMB are stable over time, and if so which are the most stable and which are the least stable. Gardner (2001) concluded that some attributes are more capable of change than others. In fact, he stated that the measures of attitudes towards the learning situation, and teacher are relatively flexible (p.15). This is a very positive development because not only does it support these data but it also highlights the fact that this “flexibility” of attitudes towards the teacher, and learning situation could be worked on, and/ or enhanced by classroom interventions, and motivational initiatives in order to facilitate more positive motivational experiences, and less negative ones, if it is not this fixed or static entity.

Even so, on a methodological note, although Gardner (2001) measured L2 motivation on two occasions over seven months to investigate its stability, it could still be argued that two “snapshots” of L2 motivation are not really very different from one “snapshot”. In fact, with regards to all of these participants, if we measured their L2 motivation in this way, twice in seven months with these quantitative measuring instruments, they might still not be able to reflect the volatility of their actual situation-specific L2 motivation, as they responded to the actual events and happenings in the actual L2 classroom on a day-to-day basis. My findings also indirectly raised the question of whether measuring L2 motivation, (O), once or twice, might be enough to represent L2 motivation within a prolonged behavioural sequence like L2 learning.

In sum, to overcome this level of motivational fluctuation demonstrated, situational interest would have to firstly be “caught”, and then most importantly,

“held”, as Mitchell (1993) pointed out. These data showed quite how difficult that could potentially be in practice, even for the second set of participants. Sometimes, it could be “caught” for a short space of time, but not “held”, even within a lesson, which was especially surprising for the second set whose general motivation, (their cognitions), was strong, and their L2 academic performance was generally good, and therefore one would not expect them to be so easily influenced by events, and happenings on a day-to-day basis in the classroom.



### 4.3.2 Key Positive and Negative Influences on L2 Motivation (Phase A and Phase B)

Having found out if the participants were either solely motivated, both motivated and not motivated, or solely not motivated over time from their perspective, (4.3.1), it now seemed important to investigate what key positive, and negative influences were impacting upon their motivation over time, by examining the data collected from the journals, (Appendix C), (Phase A and Phase B), in more detail. After all, if I wanted to refine, and improve my own professional practice, I had to seek to understand these key influences.

My view was that a whole series of positive, and/ or negative influences could potentially affect the motivational quality of the participants' learning experience, so therefore weight of opinion data firstly needed to be gathered about what the participants perceived to be these key positive, and negative influences impacting upon them, given the future action-oriented aspect of my investigation. In addition, in the field of L2 research, a few small scale studies had also investigated negative influences impacting upon L2 learning, (Chambers, 1993; Dornyei, 1998; Oxford, 1998; Ushioda, 1998), but more contributions of weight of opinion data needed to be made about not only negative influences, but also positive ones.

*Tables 4.12 and 4.13* set out the results of key positive influences for the first, and second set of participants, respectively, with sample extracts, and numbers to illustrate the eleven positive categories for the first set of participants, and twelve positive categories for the second set. *Tables 4.14, and 4.15* set out the results of the key negative influences for the first, and second set of participants, respectively, with



sample extracts, and numbers to illustrate the fourteen negative categories for the first set of participants, and twelve negative categories for the second set of participants. These data answered Question 2, (Phase A), (3.1.2) and Question 6, (Phase B), (3.2.1)

*Table 4.12: Key Positive Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase A)*

Key + Influences	n	Examples
1) Likes the skill, task, and/ or activity	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I'm interested in writing, that's my favourite activity.</li> <li>- I like this listening. I like English. I like the topic.</li> <li>- I was really interested in the writing tasks. I liked learning about infectious diseases.</li> </ul>
2) Can do the skill, task, and/ or activity	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was finished my report about the disease. I was able to do it and keep trying hard.</li> <li>- It was about malaria... a lot of difficult words in book, but I could do it and take the class positively.</li> <li>- I could find the web-site of Lassa fever, understand about Lassa fever and write down information about it on the work-sheet.</li> </ul>
3) Positive Class/ Group Interaction	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today was so great. ...it was the occasion for me to work with all the members of the class.</li> <li>- Group member helped me.....x explained what to do.</li> <li>- I have a perfect group...my group is nice, (we understood each other).</li> </ul>
4) Topic is of interest	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I like to learn new things. Bird flu is the new thing. Now a lot of countries in Asia got this disease so I want to know a lot.</li> <li>- Researching diseases is interesting.</li> <li>- Like to do unknown things. This topic is new and interesting.</li> <li>- Guest speaker's topic is interesting, (brain gym).</li> </ul>
5) Likes the classroom environment	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The class environment is interesting, comfortable and fun.</li> <li>- I like to go to the lab to research.</li> </ul>
6) See the importance of the skill, task, and/ or activity	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need to do this essay writing for the exam.</li> <li>- I need this writing for university.</li> </ul>
7) Challenging, but rewarding, skill, task, and/ or activity	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This activity was difficult in some sentences but I could do it and hear many words.</li> </ul>
8) Satisfaction from making an effort	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I could keep trying hard all lesson, and I could do it.</li> </ul>
9) Got a good grade	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was very happy with my grade on the class assignment.</li> </ul>
10) Introduction of a new topic	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We can seat as a new group and discuss about a different topic from some recent class...I feel not boring like before.</li> </ul>
11) Fear of bad grades	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Even if I am not motivated, I worked hard in this class because I need better grades to pass Grade 10.</li> </ul>
Total	119 comments	

*Table 4.13: Key Positive Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase B)*

Key + Influences	n	Examples
1) Sees the importance of the skill, task and/ or activity	104	- The debate class helped me be ready for the speaking test.
2) Likes the skill, task, and/ or activity	87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was motivated by what I learnt today because I am very interested in statistics and economic information.</li><li>- I am so excited about writing this role play about passive, assertive and aggressive. It is so fun.</li></ul>
3) Topic is of interest	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I really liked this topic about “apples and pears”, (body shapes). It is very interesting. Being overweight is a serious concern for all.</li><li>- The task about the dangerous working conditions was really interesting.</li></ul>
4) Can do the skill, task, and/ or activity	68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I can do reading comprehension and summary, I am lucky.</li><li>- I was motivated by the test. It was so easy and I could do it.</li><li>- Correcting wrong grammatical sentences was good for me, because I have confidence in grammar.</li></ul>
5) Positive class, and/ or group interactions	58	- I enjoyed discussing the article with my group to find out about our own dangerous situations in our life. I was very happy in this group.
6) Got a good grade, and/ or mark	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- My grade for the holistic medicine essay is 7/8 and 7/8. I was so satisfied and pleased.</li><li>- I was motivated because we had a vocab test and I got a good score, (9/10).</li></ul>
7) Having to do exam, and/ or test	32	- The test was so exciting. It made me realise just how important English is to me.
8) Challenging, but rewarding, skill, task, and/ or activity	28	- I was motivated. A lot of new things. That was a challenge and difficult but it was worth it.
9) Able to stay focused	12	- I know Rome was not built in a day and today I can go on trying all lesson.
10) Teacher	8	- The teacher gave me good feedback about my summary.
11) Could choose the skill, task, and/ or activity	6	- We could choose what activity we wanted to do about jobs. I chose to write a CV for others and then myself.
12) Fear of bad grades	3	- I must study for this test so I can improve my grade.
Total	520 comments	

***Table 4.14: Key Negative Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase A)***

<b>Key – Influences</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Examples</b>
1) Too difficult a skill, task, and/ or activity	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The listening was so fast so some words I can't really hear. I need to improve my listening.</li> <li>- The text has too much difficult vocabulary which I never saw before.</li> <li>- Research part....it's too difficult.....I can just find a little bit.</li> </ul>
2) Feels tired/ lazy	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No mood to study today, (I have been playing all night with my friends and there is no other reason for being so tired).</li> </ul>
3) Feels bored with the skill, task, and/ or activity	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't want to do write task. I want to do speaking and listening.</li> <li>- I usually like to work in the lab room but today task is just not interesting.</li> <li>- We study a lot of diseases. We fell bored with those diseases.</li> </ul>
4) Too easy a skill, task, and/ or activity	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This class is too easy. Easy things are boring. I enjoy hard things.</li> </ul>
5) Topic is not interesting	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not interested in this topic...so boring. Originally, I am also not interested in this topic.</li> </ul>
6) Sick	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am ill today. I cannot concentrate.</li> </ul>
7) Disappointed with a poor grade/ mark	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I can't believe my mark. I thought it must be better. I'm disappointed, but I will try to do better in next paper, exercises.</li> </ul>
8=) Can't understand class members/ group members	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cannot understand group members-sick of them.</li> </ul>
8=) Doesn't like working in groups	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nobody helps me here.</li> </ul>
8=) Too much homework in other subjects	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have so much homework in other subjects.</li> </ul>
11=) Too repetitive a skill, task, and/ or activity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Had to repeat and repeat the same activity, (asking), many times and I fell boring.</li> </ul>
11=) Feels hungry	2	n/a
11=) Feels easily distracted	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I cannot concentrate.</li> </ul>
14) Teacher's bad mood	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When he is fine it is ok, but when he is feeling bad, class is not good.</li> </ul>
<b>Total</b>	<b>103 comments</b>	



Table 4.15: Key Negative Influences on the Participants' L2 Motivation (Phase B)

Key - Influences	n	Examples
1) Too difficult a skill, task, and/ or activity	56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I could not get that much information during the listening. It was so difficult because the speaker was speaking so fast and difficult to catch the main points.</li> <li>- I was not motivated filling in application form for jobs. It was quite difficult and I had never been write down before on this kind of form.</li> </ul>
2) Feels bored with the skill, task, and/ or activity	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was quite annoying and boring to have to write down all the dangers.</li> </ul>
3) Disappointed with grade, and/ or mark	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am concerned about my low grades.</li> <li>- I was not motivated by the results of my essay grade.</li> <li>- Word test is not good for me, (7/10).</li> </ul>
4) Worried about exam, and/ or test	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am really nervous about the speaking test, I frustrated inside, I could cry.</li> </ul>
5) Feels tired, and/ or lazy	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I feel very tired today, I cannot concentrate.</li> </ul>
6) Too much homework in this class, and/ or other subjects	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have lots of homework to do in other classes.</li> </ul>
7) The class atmosphere, and/ or environment	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jacky John and Ginna's group are shouting so noisily in Chinese. Why can't they speak English?</li> </ul>
8) Topic is not interesting	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't like writing this essay. It is boring.</li> </ul>
9) Did not learn anything useful	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Graphs are not useful for me.</li> </ul>
10=) Issues with classmates, and/ or groups	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I cannot understand the other group's talking and thinking.</li> <li>- Everyone is talking and I cannot concentrate on making my points for making the discussion.</li> </ul>
10=) Too easy a skill, task, and/ or activity	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't know what I learned in this lesson. I did this grammar in Grade 8!</li> </ul>
12) Too repetitive a skill, task, and/ or activity	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I do not want to do careers any more.</li> </ul>
Total	159 comments	

Finding 11: All participants reported that their motivation in the L2 classrooms was seriously impacted in both positive, and negative ways by the skills, tasks, and/ or activities.

The data strongly suggested that the participants' L2 motivation was seriously impacted by many characteristics of the skills, tasks, and/ or activities in the L2 classrooms. With regards to key positive influences, for the first set of participants, 6/11 categories reported, related to different aspects of the skills, tasks, and/ or activities: "likes the skill, task, and/ or activity", (1/11), "can do the skill, task, and/ or activity", (2/11), "topic is of interest", (4/11), "sees the importance of the skill, task, and/ or activity", (6/11), "challenging, but rewarding skill, task, and/ or activity", (7/11), and "introduction of a new topic", (10/11), (Table 4.12). With regards to the second set, 6/12 categories reported also related to different aspects of the skills, tasks, and/ or activities: "sees the importance of the skill, task, and/ or activity",



(1/12), “likes the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (2/12), “topic is of interest”, (3/12), “can do the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (4/12), “challenging, but rewarding skill, task, and or activity”, (8/12), and “could choose the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (11/12), (*Table 4.13*). With regards to key negative influences, for the first set, 5/14 of these categories were once again related to the actual skills, tasks, and/ or activities: “too difficult a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (1/14), “feels bored with the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (3/14), “too easy a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (4/14), “topic is not interesting, (5/14), and “too repetitive a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (11/14), (*Table 4.14*). With regards to the second set, 5/12 negative categories reported also related to different aspects of the skills, tasks, and/ or activities: “too difficult a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (1/12), “feels bored with the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (2/12), “topic is not interesting”, (8/12), “too easy a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (10=/12), and “too repetitive a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (12/12), (*Table 4.15*).

Although all the participants were affected by the skills, tasks, and/ or activities, it was significant that the different sets were affected in slightly different ways. With regards to positive influences, the first set appeared to be intrinsically oriented, for example, the most commonly cited key positive influence was whether they “liked” the skills, tasks, and/ or activities, (n=40/119), and the fourth one was the “topic was of interest”, (n=12/119). Vallerand (1997) posited that there were three types of intrinsic motivation, and this was perhaps what he described as the intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation. It seemed that these participants wanted to be made to feel interested in the skills, tasks, and/ or activities by external forces, and as such, in this case, it might have shown that they were not very self-determined or autonomous, in their approach to L2 learning. Perhaps they were generally not

comfortable learning in English, and were always looking for interesting activities to stimulate them. And, in fact, this “intrinsic” orientation did not lead to high performance in grades for these participants, (*Table 3.4*). In addition, the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and eleventh most commonly cited key positive influences were “sees the importance/ value of the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (n=8/119), “challenging, but rewarding, skill, task, and/ or activity”, (n=5/119), “satisfaction from making an effort, (n=4/119), “got a good grade”, (n=3/119) and “fear of bad grades”, (n=1/119), showing that these participants were also extrinsically oriented to a very minor degree, (given the weightings involved). The type of extrinsic orientation that was displayed might be what Deci & Ryan (1985) defined as the third type of extrinsic motivation, called “regulation through identification” given that these participants could see the value of the skill, task, and/ or activity, wanted to feel challenged, and got satisfaction from making an effort. Therefore, these data seemed to exemplify a more positive form of extrinsic motivation, (that is, a more self-determined form).

With regards to the second set, the most commonly cited positive influence was related to whether the participants “saw the importance of” the actual skills, tasks, and/ or activities, (n=104/520). Furthermore, it was noteworthy that the second, and third were “likes the skill, task and/ or activity”, (n=87/520), and “topic is of interest”, (n=80/520). In addition, the eighth was “challenging but rewarding, skill, task, and/ or activity”, (n=28/520). Furthermore, the eleventh was “could choose the skill, task, and/ or activity”, (n=6/520). These findings showed that the second set of participants were both extrinsically, and intrinsically oriented, in that although they were pragmatic, and wanted to see the utility of skills, tasks, and/ or activities, they also



wished to enjoy them. It was also of interest that the sixth, seventh, and twelfth most commonly cited key positive influences were related to exams, and grades: “got a good grade, and/ or mark”, (n=34/520), “having to do an exam, and/ or test”, (n=32/520), and “fear of bad grades”, (n=3/520), hence illustrating the extent of the participants’ extrinsic orientation, and providing support for Hidi’s (2000) claim that tangible extrinsic rewards might not always be a bad thing. In fact, these extrinsic influences were not cited as much by the first set. It seemed that this second set were also displaying “regulation through identification”, since they had identified with the personal importance of certain language learning behaviours required in this school, (that is, accepting having to do exams, attempting to get good marks, and worrying about bad grades). In short, they had accepted these regulations as their own, and relished the challenges.

These findings illustrated that students with better grades, (the second set), might use both a combination of intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation to their own advantage to perform well in class. Therefore, extrinsic, and intrinsic motivation are not necessarily dichotomous concepts, with regards to the second set of participants. In addition, weaker students, in terms of grades, (the first set), might be intrinsically motivated, but given their lack of extrinsic motivation, they may not perform well in grades, because of their lack of strategic focus, and their need to be superficially stimulated.

With regards to negative influences, the data collected in both phases mirrored, and complemented the data about key positive influence, and demonstrated the importance of looking at both sides of L2 motivation, (as suggested in 1.3), because

data showed that a positive influence can quickly, and suddenly flip to a negative influence or vice-versa, with regards to the skills, tasks, and/ or activities within a short time-span. With regards to the first set, whilst “liking the skill, task, and/ or activity” was the most commonly cited positive influence, (n=40/119), conversely, as soon as the participants felt “not interested in, and bored with the skill, task, and/ or activity”, it became the third most commonly cited negative influence, (n=14/103). And in fact, whilst the topic must be of “interest” to be a key positive influence, (the fourth most commonly cited positive influence), (n=12/119), conversely, if this was not the case, the topic became a negative influence, (the fifth most commonly cited negative influence), (n=7/103). The seventh most commonly cited influence was “disappointed with a poor grade/ mark”, (n=4/103).

With regards to the second set, the second, eighth, ninth, and twelfth most commonly cited key negative influences related to the skills, tasks, and/ or activities were that they were “bored with the skill, task, and/ or activity, (n=25/159), “topic is not interesting”, (n=7/159), “did not learn anything useful”, (n=5/159) and “too repetitive a skill, task, and/ or activity, (n=1/159). Furthermore, the third, and fourth most commonly cited key negative influences were “disappointed with grade, and/ or mark”, (n=21/159) and “worried about an exam, and/ or test”, (n=12/159). These data provided further support for this set of participants’ combination of intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation.

With regards to other empirical research, these findings about negative influences were in line with other research about external “demotives”, for example, Oxford’s (1998) investigation about L2 “demotivation”, Ushioda’s (1998) qualitative



investigation about effective motivational thinking, and Dornyei's (1998) study of student demotivation, and the key influences on it, as set out in 2.3. In addition, all of the above described findings were in line with other empirical research documented in 2.3 which illustrated that course-specific aspects (either directly related to the teacher or within control of the teacher) may be some of the most significant influences on L2 motivation (Nikolov, 1999; Oxford, 1998; Ushioda, 1998) further illuminating the important role that situational interest can play in learning (Hidi, 1990; Hidi & Anderson, 1992; Hidi & Berndorff, 1998) as set out in 2.2.5. After all, research has shown that by focusing on the enhancement of situational interest in the classrooms, educators can find ways to foster students' involvement in specific content areas, and increase levels of academic motivation (Bergin, 1999; Hoffmann & Hausler, 1998; Lepper, 1985; Mitchell, 1993). In fact, my findings showed not only what aspects of the L2 classrooms triggered situational interest, but also perhaps equally important, what factors thwarted it.

In theoretical terms, it seemed that Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory helped understand the different motives, and combinations of motives that the participants had, as well as the classroom conditions, and events that support them, or forestall them. This was of fundamental importance given the future action-oriented aspect of my investigation.

In addition, with regards to Dornyei & Otto's (1998) process model of L2 motivation, and the "actional" stage, their postulation that the quality of the learning experience is the most important influence on ongoing learning was supported by these findings. They also postulated that the learner's sense of self-determination, and

autonomy is another key influence in this “actional” stage, and in some ways that was also shown to be the case in this context, because with regards to the first set of participants, although seemingly “intrinsically” oriented, they were not particularly autonomous, and self-determined in their learning, whereas the second set of participants used a combination of both intrinsic, and extrinsic motivation to be more autonomous, and self-determined. In addition, Dornyei & Otto (1998) also postulated that task conflict, competing action tendencies, other distracting influences, and the availability of action alternatives have a weakening effect on the resultant motivational force associated with the particular course of action. My findings in these particular L2 classrooms, supported their postulation about task conflict, because one of the key negative influences cited by all the participants was “too much homework in other subjects”, which was the eighth equal most negative key influence for the first set, and “too much homework in this class and/ or other subjects”, which was the sixth most commonly cited negative one for the second set. In addition, Dornyei & Otto (1998) postulated that knowledge of, and skills in, using self-regulatory strategies such as learning strategies, goal setting strategies, and motivational maintenance strategies, were an important part of enhancing motivation. With regards to the second set, there were many examples of participants using learning strategies, and goal-setting strategies, but not motivational strategies, in my data. For example, Midori, in Lesson 10, wrote about her problems with remembering, and using difficult vocabulary, even when using learning strategies, and then said:

“I am worried about this. I write each vocabulary to remember in book, but I cannot remember very well. I don’t know how to remember it”.



In addition, Georgie, in Lesson 5, demonstrated her use of goal-setting strategies, by stating in relation to her “problems” associated with a difficult, and fast listening activity:

“I still need to work harder, listen more and develop better listening skills, they are not as good as a native speaker”.

And, with regards to improving her debating skills, thus demonstrating learning strategies, she stated:

“I really need to read more, watch TV more and enlarge my knowledge more on all facts. This may help for the debate”.

With regards to Dornyei & Otto’s postulation that perceived consequences of action abandonment may be the last motivational factor to keep learners going, I could not see any participant wanting to give up, and then suddenly weighing up what action abandonment would really entail, and then continuing on, perhaps because there was not really any option to do this in this institutionalised learning context.

Finding 12: All participants were affected by whether they perceived themselves to be able to do the skills, tasks, and/ or activities.

It was also noteworthy that all of the participants were affected by whether they perceived themselves to be able to do, (or not do), the skills, tasks, and/ or activities. “Can do the skill, task, and/ or activity” was therefore the second most frequently cited key positive influence, with regards to the first set of participants, (n=17/119),

and the fourth most commonly cited one with regards to the second set of participants, (n=68/520). In addition, “too difficult a skill, task, and/ or activity” was the most commonly cited key negative influence for both sets of participants, with regards to the first set, (n=29/103), and the second set, (n=56/159). However, the fourth most commonly cited key negative influence for the first set was “too easy a skill, task, and/ or activity”, (n=8/103), and for the second set it was the tenth equal category, (n=2/159), showing that if they perceived the task to not be of a reasonable standard of difficulty, they did not want to do it either, however less so with regards to the second set, perhaps because they were given more difficult tasks in their class. Regardless of whether the participants were better performing students, their sense of competence, (self-efficacy beliefs), was still a powerful influence on their L2 motivation, though not so pronounced with the second set of participants.

In theoretical terms, these findings supported Bandura’s (1986) postulation in the self-efficacy part of his social cognitive theory, that self-referent thought mediates between knowledge, and action, and through self-reflection, individuals evaluate their own experiences, and thought-processes.

Bandura (1986) postulated that self-efficacy beliefs are readily influenced by four types of experience: enactive attainment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states, as set out in 2.2.4. In these L2 classrooms, examples of some of these experiences were demonstrated. For example, with regards to enactive attainment, personal experiences affected whether the individual felt they could do the skill, task, and/ or activity, or not. For example, after completing a challenging listening activity, a female participant from the second set stated:



“I still need to work harder, to listen more and develop better listening skills”.

Georgie, 15, Taiwan.

With regards to vicarious experiences, the second set of participants often compared themselves with others, including not only their peers, but also with regards to “native speakers”. For example, a male participant from the second set stated:

“The expected standard between me and a first language learner is distant. I have a lot to work on”.

Akio, 16, Japan.

Another male participant from the second set stated:

“I speak in short sentences with minimum vocabulary. I want to speak like a native speaker”.

Derek, 16, Korea.

With regards to verbal persuasion, my findings did not provide examples of this type of experience. But, with regards to physiological states, my findings showed that all the participants’ self-efficacy was affected by these. For example, with regards to the first set, the second, sixth, and eleventh equal most commonly cited key negative categories were “feels tired, and/ or lazy”, (n=20/103), “sick”, (n=5/103), and “feels hungry”, (n=2/103). The other eleventh equal one was “feels easily distracted”,

(n=2/103). With regards to the second set, the fifth most commonly cited negative influence was simply that they were “feeling tired, and/ or lazy”, (n=11/159).

Bandura (1977) provided evidence that self-efficacious students participate more readily, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when they encounter difficulties than do those who doubt their capabilities. It is therefore puzzling that with regards to the second set of participants, although they could be considered hard-working, and participatory, they were still not satisfied with their performance in both a general, and specific way, (see 4.2.3), as well as these above-described data. Perhaps even students with good grades need help to develop their self-efficacy beliefs in this context.

With regards to Dornyei & Otto’s (1998) process model of L2 motivation, and the “actional” stage, they postulated that the perceived contingent relationship between action and outcome, and the perceived progress could be an influence on the learner. This was shown to be the case in this context as the participants did constantly evaluate how they were doing, and with regards to the second set of participants it was quite puzzling that they evaluated how they were doing, and their perceived progress in such a critical way.

Finding 13: The first set of participants were more affected than the second set in both positive, and negative ways, by interactions with others in the L2 classroom.

Data also suggested that that the participants could be affected by their interactions with others in positive, and negative ways. With regard to the first set of participants, the third, and fifth most frequently cited key positive influences were “positive class/ group interactions”, (n=16/119), and “likes the classroom environment”, (n=11/119). With regards to the second set of participants, although they viewed “positive group interactions” as the fifth most commonly cited influence, (n=58/520), this was clearly less important than for the first set. These data showed that these participants may have been more pragmatic, adaptable, and flexible in their approach to L2 learning situations, and therefore seemed less affected by group interactions. This was in line with Bandura’s (1997) postulation that self-efficacious students have fewer adverse emotional reactions when they encounter difficulties, as set out in 2.2.4.

With regards to the first set of participants, the eighth equal most commonly cited key negative influences were “can’t understand class members/ group members”, (n=3/103), and “doesn’t like working in groups”, (n=3/103). In addition, they were also affected by the “teacher’s bad mood”, (n=1/103). For the second set of participants, the seventh, and tenth equal most commonly cited key negative influences were to do with the class atmosphere, and/ or environment, (n=8/159), and “issues with classmates and/ or groups”, (n=2/159).

These data were in line with previously documented empirical research, which provided evidence of the significance of good interactions with others in the L2 classrooms, for example, the impact of the group atmosphere, and general interaction



between group members upon the students' L2 motivation (Clement et al., 1994) as documented in 2.3. In theoretical terms, the effects of the learner group, and the classroom climate are also postulated by Dornyei & Otto's (1998) process model of L2 motivation to be important influences in the "actional" stage.

And in addition, also in theoretical terms, with regards to Dornyei & Otto's (1998) process model of L2 motivation, they postulated that during the "actional" stage certain other key figures can also affect the motivational quality of the learning process, namely the teacher, and the parents. Dornyei & Otto (1998) postulated that how teachers structure classroom life, for example, performance appraisal, and reward structure are also key influences in this stage, and this was reflected to be the case in my data. For example, many references were made to when participants were happy or sad with a mark or grade. One male participant from the second set of participants, stated:

"I was motivated with the vocab test. I got 15/20 and I want higher scores".

Akio, 16, Japan.

One female participant from the second set of participants stated:

"I could not get good marks for test. I am sad. I have to spend even more time studying".

Midori, 16, Japan.



In sum, these findings therefore highlighted the importance of gathering weight of opinion data about how individuals are being affected motivationally by the situation-specific context, from their very own perspective. For unless we seek to understand key positive, and negative influences in the L2 classrooms, it will be difficult to know how to refine, and improve one's own professional practice.

### 4.3.3 Reasons Underlying Motivational Fluctuation (Phase A and Phase B)

Given that I was seeking to understand the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation from the perspective of teenagers, I decided to complement the weight of opinion data collected in the previous two sections, by delving deeper into L2 motivation, and analysing how it fluctuated over the learning periods for individual participants, and also groups of participants, in more detail, thus illuminating “motivational imbalances” between them, and most importantly, pinpointing the underlying reasons. Knowing more about these, by “dismantling” the happenings, and events in the lessons, partly contributed to further, and deeper understanding about how it might be possible for me to refine, and improve my own professional practice.

So, which individual participants did I choose? Given that any class, (even one that has been streamed, like these classes), will comprise a variety of different types of learners, I decided to categorise six L2 learners in each class, into two groups, in order to pinpoint motivational differences between them, in each class and sometimes, *between* the two classes. Two groups of three participants for each class were thus identified. The first group had good grades, and the second group had poor grades in relation to others, in their own class, at the end of the learning period. By using my original coding system introduced in 4.3.1, again to identify whether each of these participants reported to be either fully motivated, (O), both motivated and not motivated, (OX), or not motivated at all, (X), for each lesson, motivational fluctuation between participants, and also groups, was illuminated over the course of the learning period. “Motivational imbalances” between participants were therefore highlighted

in a visual way, thus answering Question 7, (3.2.1). Then, the reasons why each specific participant felt this way for all lessons were documented. The way these participants seemed to define motivation in their journals was whether they were “interested in”, or “saw value” in the happenings, and events in the L2 classrooms.

*Tables 4.16, 4.17, and 4.18* set out the data about the group of participants who had good grades in the first set at the end of the learning period. This included the female participant with the top grade, (*Table 4.16*), the male participant with the top grade, (*Table 4.17*), and a female participant who improved a grade, (*Table 4.18*). *Tables 4.19, 4.20, and 4.21* set out the data about the group of participants who had good grades in the second set. This included the female participant, and male participant who had the top grades in their class, (*Tables 4.19, and 4.20, respectively*), and another female participant who also had very high grades, (*Table 4.21*).

*Tables 4.22, 4.23, and 4.24* set out the data about the group of participants who had poor grades in first set at the end of the learning period. This included a male participant who dropped a grade, (*Table 4.22*), another male participant who also dropped a grade, (*Table 4.23*), but clearly was underperforming in this class, (triangulated with other grades in other classes), and finally another male participant who also dropped a grade, and spent the whole quarter experiencing both positive, and negative influences, (OX) in 9/12 lessons, (*Table 4.24*). *Tables 4.25, 4.26, and 4.27* set out the data about group of participants who had weaker grades in the second set. This included a male participant who usually got the lowest grades in this class, (*Table 4.25*), and two other female students who consistently also got quite low grades in relation to others in their class, (*Tables 4.26, and 4.27*).



Finding 14: L2 motivation in context cannot necessarily be linked to achievement, (in grades).

With regards to the first set of participants, data showed that the group who got the best grades at the end of the quarter had experienced the most lessons feeling fully motivated, (*Tables 4.16, 4.17, and 4.18*). The highest performing female student according to grades was Jenny who had  $O=6$ . The highest performing male student according to grades was Ken. He had  $O=5$ . The female who improved a grade, (Linda), had  $O=7$  over the course of the quarter. On the other hand, data showed that the group who got poor grades at the end of the quarter had not experienced as many lessons fully motivated, (*Tables 4.22, 4.23, and 4.24*). In fact, Chan, (the student who dropped a grade), only had  $O=2$ . In addition, Edward, (a student who did badly in the class but did well in other subjects), only had  $O=4$ . In addition, Tom, (a student who also dropped a grade), had  $O=3$ ,  $X=0$  but  $OX=9$ .

With regards to the second set of participants, however, what was of research interest was that some participants who got the best grades in this class seemed to spend less lessons fully motivated compared to their weaker classmates. This contrasted sharply with the first set of participants, (see above). In fact, the highest performing female student in this second set according to grades, was Georgie who had  $O=10$ . The highest performing male student was Min Sung who had  $O=14$ . But, another high performing female participant, (June), had  $O=0$ . In total, these three participants spent 24 lessons feeling fully motivated, ( $O$ ), over the semester, and were absent in total for 7 lessons. On the other hand, data showed that their weaker counterparts in class, generally experienced more lessons feeling fully motivated. In fact, Akio, the male participant who usually got the lowest grades in this class had



O=18. Yoon, and Midori, two weak female participants had O=15, and O=6, respectively. These three participants spent 39 lessons feeling fully motivated, (O), and were absent in total for 1 lesson.

These data told us that although in some ways we can link L2 motivation to achievement as set out in 2.1, for example, Min Sung, (Phase B), and Jenny, Ken and Linda, (Phase A), this may not always be the case. For example, June did very well in grades, but was not overly motivated in the situation-specific context. On the other hand, Akio, and Yoon were motivated in this L2 class, and although this led to L2 situation-specific motivation, it did not lead to achievement. Motivation may not always be linked to achievement, and it may sometimes be more an antecedent of behaviour. These findings were not in line with Gardner's (1972) claim that motivation is a significant cause of variability in language learning success, (2.2.1).

However, what was significant about these findings from the second set of participants, was that they showed that L2 situation specific motivation, (engagement), really does matter because it embraces important goals of schooling besides achievement. L2 classrooms where students are engaged, are happy places where they feel a sense of belonging, and self-worth. Achieving the level of engagement that these weaker participants in the second set did, is critical in an age that values life-long learning, active citizenship, and a responsibility for self. These engaged learners were doers, and decision-makers, who had very clear plans to be teachers, and nurses, and who were developing skills in L2 learning, participation, and communication that would hopefully serve them in their future careers through

adulthood. Too often social, and emotional dimensions of schooling are overshadowed by the all important goal of achievement.

Finding 15: All participants responded to the events, and happenings in the L2 classrooms in their own unique way.

Given that I wanted to eventually refine, and improve my own professional practice, I sought to understand what were the reasons some lessons appeared motivating, or not motivating for the majority of participants, (better, and worse performing students added together), in each class.

By identifying “good” lessons, (with the most Os), and “bad” lessons, (with the most Xs) over the course of the learning period for all six participants together in each class, I was able to highlight situation-specific L2 class trends over time. The reason I put better, and weaker performers together, (in each class), to investigate trends, was because a teacher always needs to cater the lessons to all students that will make up a typical class.

With regards to “good” lessons, for the first set of participants, data showed that the lesson in which most of these participants, (5/6 participants), were all fully motivated, (O), was Lesson 8. Data also showed that another lesson in which most of these participants were also fully motivated, (O), (4/6 participants), was Lesson 6. In addition, 3/6 participants were also fully motivated, (O), in Lesson 4. For the second set, data showed that the lessons in which most of them were fully motivated, (O), were Lessons 11 and 23, (5/6 participants). In fact, 1/6 participants was absent in



both these lessons. The reasons why the participants perceived themselves to be motivated were as follows:

With regards to the first set of participants, and Lesson 8, they liked the topic, (about diseases). They were also given the opportunity to choose a disease that they themselves were interested in, and wanted to research, for example, SARS, dengue fever, Japanese B encephalitis. And, some of these diseases were of great relevance to these Asian participants. Additionally, they all seemed to feel motivated when working through the medium of the Internet, to research. They also enjoyed working in pairs of their choice, and sharing information with their partners from the worksheet. The work-sheet that was filled in by the participants was useful in that it provided them with a good structure.

These participants seemed to be motivated in this lesson because of their opportunities for personal choice, for example, not only in terms of choosing a disease, but also in terms of choosing partners. In addition, the topic was meaningful and relevant to the participants. Using the Internet was also motivating. These data supported Cordova & Lepper's (1996) claim that giving students' choices seems to enhance interest. They also supported the claim that positive feelings for content can be facilitated by offering choice in tasks (Flowerday & Schraw, 2003). In addition, they also supported the claim that situational interest has been shown to positively influence cognitive performance in work with computers (Azevedo, 2004). And, finally, they were in line with the claim that meaningfulness of the tasks, and/ or personal involvement can facilitate maintenance of situational interest (Harackiewicz et al., 2002), as set out in 2.2.5.



Lesson 6 worked well too, which was surprising because in Lesson 5 the participants stated they were not interested in the topic of malaria. But, the participants seemed to enjoy the activity of classifying the vocabulary into symptoms, life forms, verbs, killers, and organs, even although they were not that interested in the topic. They then did a vocabulary test of 15 words which they chose themselves, with a partner of their choice. These participants seemed to enjoy being allowed to choose not only the content of the activity, but also their partners. The teacher also told them to try to do better than last lesson's test, and they seemed to feel challenged in a positive way, perhaps partly because they had this level of choice with regards to content. The participants then settled down to answer the comprehension questions on malaria at the end of the lesson. These data provided further support for Cordova & Lepper's (1996) claim that giving students' choices does seem to enhance interest.

Lesson 4 also worked well because the topic, (about brain gym), was novel and personally interesting for the majority of participants. There was also the additional interest of a guest speaker. The task of writing a letter to a brother who was not doing well in school to explain to him how brain gym could help him was of great interest in terms of the topic, (relevant, and interesting for teenagers), and also the skill, (writing), for some of these participants. In fact, Jenny, (*Table 4.16*), Ken, (*Table 4.17*), and Linda, (*Table 4.18*), stated how much they enjoyed writing essays. These data illustrated that making the learning more personally relevant, and meaningful stimulated interest, and also lent support to the claim that situational interest can be triggered by character identification or personal relevance, and intensity (Renniger & Hidi, 2002), as introduced in 2.2.5.

With regards to the second set of participants, Lesson 11 worked well because the participants were allowed to collaborate together, and vote for an oral topic for the examination. They formed groups, and discussed a choice of two topics: one related to school uniform, and the other to future careers. They chose careers, and got back into groups, and brainstormed what qualities were required for their chosen career, and what qualities made a person “employable”. They used adjectives, and phrases from several worksheets, as well as using the Internet. The participants reported to be motivated because they were particularly interested in the topic, and it was also a topic of great personal utility. They were also excited about the speaking test, having inwardly grasped the test’s meaning and worth, and therefore had internalised the regulation. These data supported the claim set out in 2.2.5 that children who are interested in particular topics, and activities pay closer attention, persist for longer periods of time, learn more, and enjoy their involvement more than individuals without this type of interest (Ainley, 1994, 1998; Prenzel, 1988; Renninger, 1987, 1990, 1998; Schiefele, 1991, 1996). In addition, these data also supported the claim that demonstrating the utility of the learning, and making it personally relevant can spark interest (Chabay & Sherwood, 1992; Cordova & Lepper, 1996; Mitchell, 1993; Parker & Lepper, 1992; Ross, 1993), as set out in 2.3. These data also supported Hidi’s (2000) claim that extrinsic rewards might not always be a bad thing, and can motivate individuals.

In addition, with regards to Lesson 23, the topic was about behavior, and being aggressive, assertive, or passive. The participants read articles, and identified whether the characters were behaving aggressively, assertively, or passively. They then formed groups, and were secretly given one of these three adjectives, and they worked



on a role play to introduce to the others in the class. (They were allowed to form a group of their own choice). They performed their role plays to their peers, and their peers then had to guess how they were behaving. The participants reported to feel motivated with this topic, which they regarded as interesting and relevant, as well as having personal utility. Many said it helped them in school, and was useful for teenagers to know about now, but also for their future. They also could choose their own groups for the role plays. Therefore, these data also lent further support for the claims set out in Lessons 8, 4, 6, and 11 about the motivational effects of interest, personal utility, and choice.

With regards to “bad” lessons, for the first set of participants, data showed that the lesson in which most of them, (4/6), were not motivated at all, (X), was Lesson 1. Lesson 5 also had 3/6 participants not motivated at all, (X). For the second set of participants, there was not a lesson over the course of the semester where any of them were not motivated at all, but Lesson 6 had 5/6 participants both motivated and not motivated, (OX). Lesson 18 had 2/6 participants not motivated at all, (X), but one participant was absent. The reasons why the participants did not perceive themselves to be fully motivated were as follows:

With regards to the first set of participants, and Lesson 1, the participants had to learn difficult words about health, and make sentences with them. They then had to get into groups, and read their sentences to the others, and the others had to write these down. The teacher then gave a vocabulary test. This lesson was slow-paced and lacking in variety, in terms of both tasks, and/ or activities, as well as the media of delivery, focusing solely on vocabulary written down on just one handout, for 80



full minutes. In addition, the reading, and dictating task with the sentences was inauthentic, and slightly meaningless. And, in fact, vocabulary is not one of the designated skills areas of this IBMYP Grade 10 language course, so it may not have appeared to have personal utility for the participants.

Secondly, in Lesson 5, a new topic (malaria) was introduced. The participants started off by getting into groups, (not of their own choice), the task being to write three statements about malaria. This seemed not to be motivating because they could not check references or search on the Internet, and therefore some of the participants had no idea what to write. It was also a meaningless, and inauthentic task, in that, most students nowadays would never be in this situation where they could not access the Internet to check information. Given that they also could not chose their own groups, the fact that there was not much initial interest in the topic, and lack of interest in writing the three statements, the students seemed not to be interested in doing the vocabulary worksheet about malaria either. The lesson finished with a formulaic reading comprehension about malaria, from the same text book as every single other reading comprehension utilised in this L2 class, again illustrating a lack of variety in texts.

With regards to the second set of participants, in Lesson 18, a difficult reading text taken from a Unicef publication was read, and the participants had to answer difficult questions about complicated issues to do with aid, and developing countries. Vocabulary was difficult, and the topic was serious. Interest in the topic was not triggered, and neither could the participants see the personal utility of this topic. I thought that as well as triggering interest about the lives of children in developing

countries, it would also give the opportunity to practice a relevant and meaningful skill, (reading comprehension), so the participants would see the personal utility in academic terms, since this was one of the four key skills in the course. Even so, the participants still reported to find this too boring, and also reported that the level of English was too difficult. These data showed that what a teacher may think is a motivating topic, which has relevance, and is of personal utility may simply not be the case, from the perspective of the learners.

Whilst there appear to be certain benefits in looking at “motivational trends” as above in the L2 classrooms, I also conceded that there are also certain flaws in this approach of identifying lessons in which most of the participants are either motivated or not. After all, most will not be all of our students, and that is key, given the future action-oriented aspect of my investigation.

With regards to “good” lessons, and the first set of participants, data showed that although 5/6 participants were motivated in Lesson 8, (O), 1/6 of them was still experiencing some negative influences, (OX). We should not overlook that participant. In addition, in Lesson 6, 2/6 of them were not motivated at all, (X). And, in Lesson 4, 2/6 participants were not motivated at all, (X), and 1/6 participants was both motivated and not motivated, (OX). Neither should we overlook them. With regards to the second set, however, data showed that in Lessons 11 and 23, all the participants were fully motivated, (O), as 1/6 was absent.

Furthermore, with regards to “bad” lessons, and the first set of participants, data also showed that although 4/6 participants were not motivated in Lesson 1, (X), 1/6 of



them was fully motivated, (O), and 1/6 was both motivated and not motivated, (OX). In Lesson 5, although 3 participants were not motivated at all, (X), 1/6 of them was still fully motivated, (O), and 2/6 of them were both motivated and not motivated, (OX). With regards to the second set of participants, in Lesson 18, although 2/6 participants were fully not motivated, (X), 2/6 participants were still fully motivated, (O), and 1/6 was both motivated and not motivated, (OX), although 1/6 of them was absent.

These data therefore illustrated how the participants had very unique, and individual ways of interpreting the events, and happenings in the L2 classrooms, and perhaps helped illuminate “live” classroom events that affected the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation. And in fact, these data showed that the happenings, and events in the L2 classrooms affected the participants in radically different ways, in some cases.

In empirical terms, these data were in line with Chambers’ (1993) investigation about demotivation which demonstrated that what one pupil likes, the next one may detest, as set out in 2.3. As such, perhaps these findings show that as educators, if we want to refine, and improve our professional practice, we must seek to understand how L2 motivation is affected by these in-depth aspects of the situation-specific context, from the perspective of teenagers, over time.



Finding 16: Motivation in context from the perspective of teenagers does not necessarily develop in a cumulative way, over time, for all participants.

Recently, Hidi & Renniger (2006) have introduced a four-phase model of interest development which was outlined in 2.2.5, in which they postulated that it is a cumulative process in which the first stage involves “catching” situational interest, followed by the second stage which involves “holding” situational interest, followed by the third stage of emerging individual interest, and finally there is a final stage of well-developed individual interest.

For the most part, this was not necessarily the case in these L2 classrooms. The participants reported to be sometimes motivated, and sometimes not, even within the short time-span of one lesson. So, by looking at the first part of *Tables 4.16-4.27*, the motivational trends were illuminated. Based on my original coding system of **O**, **OX**, and **X**, it did not seem that this theory could partly account for these data. In fact, these data perhaps did not show interest to develop in a cumulative way. Even so, this might have been because the time-frame was not long enough in either phase. In fact, there were no examples of a person who built up from not motivated to motivated over the course of the learning period, but there was an example of one person who was motivated, and then lost motivation over the course of the learning period in a cumulative way, because of the events, and happenings in the L2 classroom, (Edward, *Table 4.23*). One difference between the first, and second set of participants was that with regards to the former, it was difficult to identify any trends at all, as the influences that impacted upon them jumped back, and forth in a random fashion from **O** to **X** to **OX**. With regards to the first set of participants, a better performing participant, for example, Ken, (*Table 4.17*), only had 2 lessons in which he

maintained the same motivation, (O), and 2 lessons with (OX). And, a weaker participant, for example Chan, (*Table 4.22*), maintained the same motivation for 3 lessons, (X). On the other hand, with regards to the second set of participants, a better performing participant, for example, Georgie, (*Table 4.19*), maintained the same motivation for 6, and 4 lessons, respectively, (O), and (OX). A weaker participant, for example, Yoon, (*Table 4.26*), maintained the same motivation for 6, and 5 lessons, respectively, (O), and (OX). Therefore, it can be seen that with regards to the second set of participants, there was a much clearer, and more consistent pattern, in that participants seemed to report to experience the same type of influences for longer periods.

It is of interest to identify what stage of interest development these participants seem to be on. With regards to the first set of participants, it looked as if they were predominantly on the first stage of interest development where interest could sometimes be triggered, but not necessarily maintained. The second set of participants perhaps had moved onto the second stage of interest development whereby their interest could be captured, and then maintained for longer periods of time. These data also perhaps showed that individuals could remain in a particular stage for quite some time, and we ought to extend the research time-frame of any investigation about this issue. Given the action-oriented aspect of my investigation, seeking to understand more fully how interest may, or may not, develop was of fundamental importance.

Table 4.16: Jenny: The Best Female Student, (Grades), (Phase A)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O		O		O			O	O		O		O
OX			OX									
X	X				X	X			X		X	
Absent												

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Absent at beginning of term.</li><li>- Cannot follow the activities.</li><li>- Bored.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- So great.</li><li>- Enjoyed all the activities.</li><li>- Could work with all members of the class.</li><li>- Feel lively today, not bored at all.</li><li>- Want more activities like these ones.</li></ul>		
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Guest speaker interesting.</li><li>- Enjoyed the activities (exciting).</li><li>- Little bored when teacher gave assignment.</li></ul>	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I really like writing.</li><li>- Writing is my favourite activity beside speaking.</li></ul>		
5			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- So sleepy.</li><li>- Not interested in topic (boring).</li><li>- Text too many difficult words (have never seen them before).</li><li>- Don't know anything about the topic-malaria.</li></ul>
6			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Sick today.</li></ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Game in the beginning of class motivated me.</li><li>- Reading activity was exciting and fun.</li><li>- Now I am starting to learn something about malaria.</li></ul>		
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A good lesson for me and everybody (useful).</li><li>- We can research about diseases and share with others.</li></ul>		
9			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Had to repeat and repeat the same activity too many times.</li><li>- I am so bored.</li></ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I enjoy writing and I can write about what I have researched.</li><li>- I understand clearly about the disease now.</li></ul>		
11			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I feel really bored in class today because we are still studying the same topic as last class-the disease.</li><li>- Originally not interested in this topic, but I got interested, but now I am bored again.</li></ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- New topic today (nice).</li><li>- Can sit in a new group and discuss something new.</li></ul>		



Table 4.17: Ken: The Best Male Student, (Grades), (Phase A)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O		O		O			O	O				O
OX					OX					OX	OX	
X	X		X			X			X			
Absent												

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Task is normal.</li><li>- Class environment is boring.</li><li>- Group members didn't help me.</li><li>- Bored and tired of the activity.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class is interesting today.</li><li>- Activity is fun.</li><li>- My group is really nice (We understand each other and I could talk with many friends).</li><li>- I enjoy it!</li></ul>		
3			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class is so boring.</li><li>- I feel tired.</li><li>- have too much homework in other subjects.</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I like the writing task.</li><li>- It is hard but it helps me improve my vocabulary.</li></ul>		
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Task interesting.</li><li>- Task not too hard.</li><li>- But group members do not help him.</li><li>- Tries to be a leader but they seem not to understand.</li><li>- Activities are ok for me.</li></ul>	
6			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Can't believe my mark! (Should be better).</li><li>- Disappointed and upset.</li><li>- Will try harder next time on assignments/ exercises.</li></ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class was nice.</li><li>- Game ok for me.</li></ul>		
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class interesting.</li><li>- Worked so hard.</li><li>- Can know many things about typhoid fever.</li><li>- Useful for me.</li></ul>		
9			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Want to do presentation in front of class and get a mark.</li><li>- Better than doing it in pairs.</li><li>- I am bored with this topic now.</li></ul>
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Don't want to do write task.</li><li>- Want to speak and listen.</li><li>- But class so-so.</li></ul>	
11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- We studied a lot about diseases</li><li>- I am getting bored with these diseases now.</li><li>- I like the listening.</li><li>- It's difficult but I can hear many difficult words.</li><li>- I can do it.</li></ul>	

12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Perfect group for me</li><li>- Like topic</li><li>- Like class</li></ul> Said I wanted to change topic and today we have a new and interesting topic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reviewing the listening was good.</li><li>- I could know my answers from last class were right.</li></ul>		
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Table 4.18: Linda: Improved a Grade over the Quarter, (Phase A)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O	O	O		O	O	O		O				O
OX							OX		OX	OX	OX	
X			X									
Absent												

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Some of the words were difficult, some easy, but I tried to learn them all.</li><li>- I want to get high score for the test.</li><li>- I enjoyed listening to my classmate who is speaking.</li><li>- When I don't know how to spell I guess.</li><li>- I enjoyed this lesson and did not give up.</li></ul>		
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Want to learn about acupuncture (because it's from China).</li><li>- Try to learn all the difficult words.</li><li>- Separate groups makes it interesting for me to learn.</li><li>- I enjoy listening to my classmates when they are reading.</li></ul>		
3			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I am tired today.</li><li>- This guest speaker is boring.</li><li>- The exercises made me tired and sleepy.</li></ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I like this lesson so much because I like writing so much.</li><li>- I feel this essay is easy for me.</li><li>- I can write a lot of words about this Mr. J helped us too with vocabulary.</li><li>- The lesson was fun today.</li></ul>		
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I want to know about malaria (intersting).</li><li>- I like working with my group (it is funny).</li><li>- When we finish the work, we talk in English.</li><li>- My English is improving already.</li></ul> <p>(I wish my English will improve a lot this year. I will study hard because I like this class).</p>		
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Quiz is easy for me.</li><li>- I like learning about malaria.</li></ul>		
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The article is easy for me-I can understand and remember all the words.</li><li>- I do not like the game. It's not fun for me. I can't use those words from A and B to make sentences. Some are not able to make. The game does not make sense.</li></ul>	



8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This lesson is really interesting for me.</li> <li>- I can know about a new disease.</li> <li>- I can learn about what causes diseases and how to prevent them.</li> </ul>		
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I can talk with others and give information about the disease.</li> <li>- I am tired today and have a headache.</li> </ul>	
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It's easy for me because I really like writing.</li> <li>- Writing is always fun and easy for me.</li> <li>- Some information about the disease I don't understand.</li> </ul>	
11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I like to learn about new things and bird flu is the new thing.</li> <li>- Now a lot of countries in Asia got this disease so I want to know a lot and how to prevent this.</li> <li>- The listening is difficult but helps me improve my English.</li> <li>- Research part about the 16 questions about bird flu is too difficult.</li> <li>- I cannot find all the answers.</li> </ul>	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I can help the teacher to write on the board, it's fun.</li> <li>- And I am very happy with my group. We can work well together and they are so funny</li> <li>- When we are reading the article it had a lot of funny sounds and we are all enjoying pronouncing these sounds</li> </ul>		

Table 4.19: Georgie: The Best Female Student, (Grades), (Phase B)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O		O									O	O
OX	OX		OX	OX	OX	OX	OX		OX	OX		
X								X				
Absent												

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
O	O	O	O	O			O				O	O
OX					OX							
X						X		X	X			
Absent										Absent		

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Task was interesting, and not too hard, and important because it concerns our lifestyle.</li><li>- But some of my classmates did not try hard in the group discussion, and are not active enough in general, and lazy.</li></ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Could understand the text very well, and there were some interesting vocab to work on.</li><li>- Co-operated well with my classmates on the text.</li><li>- Was able to do the comprehension well and not difficult for me.</li></ul>		
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- While describing trends on the graph, I learnt helpful vocab.</li><li>- Can also use them fluently, and will use when interpreting trends.</li><li>- However, did not get full marks in vocab test, I am not motivated.</li></ul>	
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I understand the grammar points on trends very well, ie. noun and adjective and verb and adverb.</li><li>- These things are very helpful, for example in Geography.</li><li>- But I am so tired, I cannot concentrate.</li></ul>	
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- This topic on health is fun and making me more aware of my health condition.</li><li>- But I am not motivated- we had a test and I only got 13/15, others got higher than me.</li><li>- The listening is very fast and I need to work harder to develop better listening skills. I am not as good as a native speaker.</li></ul>	

6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I am not usually good at getting all the points when summarising, but I could today.</li> <li>- I am also not motivated because there are some vocab I still don't know, it's frustrating, and it makes me really tired.</li> </ul>	
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated because I worked well in my group and we did well on the discussion using facts and opinions.</li> <li>- I did not do well on the vocab test. I am getting worried, I should work harder.</li> </ul>	
8			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am not motivated today. I really need to work harder, my skills on doing comprehensions are still poor.</li> <li>- I really need to read more, watch television and enlarge my knowledge to be able to do better discussions and debates.</li> </ul>
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated doing the jumbled words activity. It was easy and fun.</li> <li>- I did well on the True/ False activity and the topic on health was useful.</li> <li>- I still need to improve my vocab. My marks are decreasing and others are getting better than me now.</li> </ul>	
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I did well on my word test and got full marks this time.</li> <li>- I enjoyed the article on working conditions and human rights.</li> <li>- I felt not motivated about my own working conditions, considering all other students find their work manageable but not our group from China and Taiwan.</li> </ul>	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We discussed the topic of our speaking test and we chose career. I was so happy because this is interesting and useful to me.</li> </ul>		
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We learnt vocab of jobs and did a job quiz. I was very interested because I like this topic.</li> <li>- I learnt about myself that I am good at aspects of art for my future career, (helpful).</li> </ul>		
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am really enjoying learning more about my interest and strength in Art and Design. I am also enjoying learning about myself and all this has confirmed my original career choice, (interior designer).</li> </ul>		
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was really motivated during the listening comprehension because I could get most of the information the first time for once.</li> </ul>		
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have a task of correcting a letter and then writing one. It was so fun. I enjoy working on grammar.</li> </ul>		



16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It was so helpful and useful to see a CV, and write a CV for others as well as for myself. Will definitely use this in future, and this is good practice.</li><li>- It is difficult to do but you need to learn the details.</li></ul>		
17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- When I was filling in the application form I found some vocab I did not know which was good.</li><li>- But today I was not motivated because I am bored with this topic now and I am scared because my speaking test is coming up.</li></ul>	
18			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I worked so hard on the vocab and I only got 5/20 in the test. I was shocked. I really need to enlarge my vocabulary.</li></ul>
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was motivated during the speaking test. I did not even look at my notes.</li><li>- I kept the conversation going.</li><li>- I was nervous but I think I did well and it was a good experience for me.</li></ul>		
20			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Not motivated when writing about myself. I was shocked about my personality score. I have quite a negative personality and I am worrying about this.</li></ul>
21			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The reading comprehension test is too difficult for me.</li><li>- My biggest problem is some vocabularies.</li><li>- My opinions also need a lot more thinking about.</li></ul>
22	Absent	Absent	Absent
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was so motivated, the topic about aggressive, assertive and passive was so interesting to me.</li><li>- I learned I am passive at school and aggressive at home.</li><li>- I enjoyed the role plays and the homework was so interesting.</li></ul>		
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I like this topic and liked reading the article about living.</li><li>- This helped me decide what kind of life I want to live and I am still learning English.</li></ul>		

Table 4.20: Min Sung: The Best Male Student, (Grades), (Phase B)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O		O	O				O	O		O	O	
OX	OX			OX	OX	OX			OX			
X												X
Absent												

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
O	O	O	O	O	O	O					O	O
OX									OX	OX		
X								X				
Absent							Absent					

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Motivated during the discussion, it was interesting conversing with friends.</li><li>- Not motivated by the reading comprehension, the topic was boring and made me sleepy.</li></ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Was fully motivated.</li><li>- Enjoyed the reading comprehension, it was so funny.</li><li>- Discussion was beneficial and topic was interesting.</li><li>- I enjoyed speaking in English and I could concentrate.</li></ul>		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Studying about statistics and answering questions about them was so interesting for me.</li><li>- I learned so good vocabulary and I can use this in other classes effectively.</li></ul>		
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was motivated because we learnt some very interesting vocab about trends, for example, to fluctuate, to soar, to plunge.</li><li>- However, some of the vocab was too easy for me, and I like to study high level vocabulary.</li></ul>	
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- We had a vocab test and I got 12/15, (good).</li><li>- But I was not motivated by the listening activity, too hard and I do not understand British English.</li></ul>	
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The article "Apples and Pears" was very interesting about body shapes.</li><li>- We learnt how to do a very good summary from the teacher and it was a very effective way to do a summary.</li><li>- But, I was not motivated in the discussion about overweight. I could not speak, I was so embarrassed. I need to learn to find points quicker and speak up.</li></ul>	

7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Had a vocabulary test and I only got 7/10. I am motivated to work and study harder.</li> </ul>		
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We had an interesting discussion about diets and health. -This is a very interesting topic because dieting is a global issue for all.</li> <li>- I could have a long and interesting conversation with my classmates.</li> </ul>		
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I only got 7/10 again on the vocab test.</li> <li>- I was not motivated because I was upset that I could not study well for this because of other projects that I was required to finish.</li> </ul>	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We had a discussion in small groups on safer working conditions.</li> <li>- I really enjoyed working with Ho Jin. We helped each other, and we had great opinions on this topic.</li> <li>- I would like to have more discussions like these on global issues.</li> </ul>		
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The discussion topic for exam is the one that I chose so I was happy.</li> <li>- I chose dentist, that is my future dream.</li> <li>- It was so interesting to research vocab related to dentist to prepare for test.</li> </ul>		
12			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am really not motivated today. I got 7 and 6 for the writing criteria. (8 is the best).</li> <li>- I am good at writing essays, so I am not happy.</li> <li>- Next time, I will prove I am the best in the class at writing.</li> </ul>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated today because of vocabulary test, I got 9/10. This was impressive as it was difficult.</li> <li>- Overall, my grade has been improving in this class, and I am very satisfied, even although I will still try to improve further.</li> </ul>		
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was so motivated with the listening comprehension.</li> <li>- It was easier than the other one on holistic medicine, and I could answer all questions fully.</li> <li>- The way of American speaking is much clearer than the other one.</li> </ul>		
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was so motivated by the speaking test.</li> <li>- I was very nervous at first, but I was so interested in the job of dentist, and had prepared in class about it, I enjoyed speaking about it.</li> <li>- I was very satisfied with my conversation.</li> </ul>		
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was really fun in class because we could chose what we wanted to do as the teacher was still testing some students in speaking.</li> <li>- I enjoyed choosing my own work.</li> </ul>		



17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I made two forms for applying for job, (CV and application form).</li> <li>- I really need this for my future, there were difficult words like, surname, salary, NI number. It was so interesting.</li> </ul>		
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was so motivated, I learnt so many words that I did not know before.</li> <li>- The worksheets were quite hard and complicated but useful to do.</li> <li>- Tomorrow we will have a vocab test. I will try to get full marks.</li> </ul>		
19	Absent	Absent	Absent
20			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was not motivated at all with this lesson.</li> <li>- I did the self-assessment but I was not really interested, the topic is not useful.</li> <li>- I did not enjoy swapping points with Derek.</li> </ul>
21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This topic was too easy for me, because I have done it in another class, so I was not motivated.</li> <li>- Even so, some questions are difficult and I was satisfied.</li> </ul>	
22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The paper related to career profiles was important and good. I made a good paragraph about why people should take pride in their work. This activity was well-done and I was satisfied.</li> <li>- I am not motivated about writing an essay that I should hand in today. I have no time.</li> </ul>	
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The topic about being assertive and not aggressive or passive was motivating. I really enjoyed doing the funny role plays, they were so fun.</li> </ul>		
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I said before that I do not like the topic of self-assessment, but today's lesson was motivating.</li> <li>- We read an interesting article and it was fun.</li> </ul>		

Table 4.21: June: Another Female Student with Good Grades, (Phase B)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O												
OX	OX	OX		OX	OX	OX	OX	OX		OX		OX
X									X			
Absent			Absent								Absent	

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
O												
OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX		OX	OX	OX	OX		
X												
Absent						Absent					Absent	Absent

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- This is important for me and so I keep trying. I like this topic about food.</li><li>- But I am not motivated because I am worried about my work in other subjects and this essay for Friday is going to be difficult.</li><li>- The new article is also difficult with so many new words.</li></ul>	
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The task is good and important, it helps me with my life. I stay focused and I am trying hard. Group members help me.</li><li>- The task is a little difficult with many professional vocabularies.</li><li>- I also have far too much homework in all my subjects and especially this class.</li></ul>	
3	Absent	Absent	Absent
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- My group helped me and the teacher motivated me. This task helps me in other lessons.</li><li>- I like this topic and handouts.</li><li>- Today I also got good feedback.</li><li>- But, the task is a little difficult and the teacher teaches too many vocab words.</li><li>- Also, I slept late and now I feel tired and not motivated.</li></ul>	
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was trying hard and stayed focused.</li><li>- The group members helped me.</li><li>- But, the listening was too difficult for me, and the topic was boring and difficult.</li><li>- I do not do well on my assignments in this class, and the work does not help me in other lessons.</li></ul>	

6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This topic helps me in my life. I keep trying hard.</li> <li>- Today I also got good feedback from the teacher. -I like the handout.</li> <li>- But, the task is too difficult. I have so much homework in this class. I want to do these tasks in our lessons.</li> </ul>	
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I like this topic and I like speaking. This helps me practice my English and helps me in my life.</li> <li>- But I am not motivated because I did not do well on the vocab test, and I am worried because I have some trouble doing the essay for tomorrow for this class. I have no time.</li> </ul>	
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I did well in my assignment today.</li> <li>- But the text in class was too difficult and there were many vocabs.</li> <li>- It's also too difficult for me to write a summary, I am tired of this and bored.</li> </ul>	
9			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The task is too difficult, and the vocab test was really difficult.</li> <li>- The homework is also too difficult and I am worried now because I have not finished it, and I also have too much work in other subjects.</li> </ul>
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I did well on my assignment today, so I feel motivated.</li> <li>- The task is easy and the atmosphere in my group is ok.</li> <li>- But, the vocab test is too easy for me and I am bored with it.</li> </ul>	
11	Absent	Absent	Absent
12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am not motivated with the grade of my essay.</li> <li>- But, I like this topic of job. It is interesting and not difficult.</li> <li>- I am also looking forward to the speaking presentation. I like to talk about my future, just like job and university because I have thought a lot about it.</li> </ul>	
13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated because I like the topic, it helps me with my life.</li> <li>- I like to sit with Sue, as I can speak a lot in English.</li> <li>- But, my vocab test was only so-so, and I'm a little worried about the essay because I have too much homework.</li> <li>- I also want to do more speaking in this class.</li> </ul>	
14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was not really motivated because although the listening activity was a little easier than what we did last time, it was still difficult for me to answer all the questions.</li> <li>- The classroom atmosphere is also boring.</li> <li>- I also wanted to discuss with my classmates about the questions.</li> </ul>	



15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I could write the letter while waiting for the speaking test. This is a good task and will help me in my future.</li> <li>- But I am not motivated because I am worried about tomorrow's speaking test, it's my turn first.</li> </ul>	
16		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have now finished my speaking test and I tried my best and enjoyed the conversation.</li> <li>- But, I was not motivated because the tape-recorder made me nervous.</li> <li>- Also I did not have time to finish the CV task.</li> </ul>	
17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I finished two CVs during this lesson and it was really helpful for my future.</li> <li>- But, the new task today was so difficult and the vocab is difficult.</li> <li>- We have so much homework in this class and I'll go back to Shanghai for holiday and I don't want all this homework at the moment.</li> </ul>	
18	Absent	Absent	Absent
19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was not here last lesson so I could not do the vocab test.</li> <li>- The topic is so important but the task so difficult.</li> <li>- The group atmosphere is boring.</li> </ul>	
20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The task is interesting and I know how important these vocabulary are. They are useful.</li> <li>- I like this type of topic and I can keep trying hard.</li> <li>- But I am not motivated because I am worried about the reading exam tomorrow.</li> </ul>	
21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I tried my best in the reading test. The article was easier to read than the one in December last year.</li> <li>- But, I was not motivated because no dictionary was allowed.</li> </ul>	
22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I like to talk about jobs and planning for my future.</li> <li>- I really enjoyed the first part of today's tasks. It was really interesting and made me thinking.</li> <li>- The vocab of jobs was not motivating because many of them are not normal jobs and I am not interested in them.</li> </ul>	
23	Absent	Absent	Absent
24	Absent	Absent	Absent

Table 4.22: Chan: Dropped a Grade over the Quarter, (Phase A)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O						O		O				
OX							OX					OX
X	X	X		X	X				X	X	X	
Absent			Absent									

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lesson too difficult</li><li>- My spelling is poor</li><li>- Legs pain (I really want to learn English but I was lazy before so my English always poor)</li></ul>
2			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Speaking is too hard for me</li><li>- Have to speak to new students (they do not understand me and I do not understand them)</li></ul>
3	Absent	Absent	Absent
4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- don't like doing writing (But I need to write to improve my English, and it will be important for what I want to study in university)</li></ul>
5			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Article too difficult for me</li><li>- Cannot read/ cannot understand</li></ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Tried hard for the test because I want to improve</li><li>- It was ok today</li><li>- I could do it</li><li>- I had prepared</li></ul>		
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Good, fun lesson</li><li>- Game was interesting and nice</li><li>- But I did not have enough time to do my work</li></ul>	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was finding out about Hepatitis A</li><li>- It was useful and interesting for me</li><li>- I like working on computer</li></ul>		
9			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening was too difficult for me</li><li>- Cannot understand many words</li><li>- Asking questions was difficult</li><li>- And speaking was too hard</li></ul>
10			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Writing was hard for me</li><li>- I don't like writing</li><li>- It is boring</li></ul>
11			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening is too hard and fast</li><li>- Could not answer any of the questions</li></ul>
12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening is still to hard for me</li><li>- I still do not understand many words</li><li>- I could not answer the 6 questions</li><li>- New topic is interesting to me and fun</li></ul>	

Table 4.23: Edward: Doing Badly in English, (Grades), but not in other Subjects, (Grades), (Phase A)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O			O			O		O			O	
OX												
X	X	X		X	X		X		X			
Absent										Absent		Absent

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1			- Easy course, can pass easily, no need to be motivated. - Tired as always.
2			- Class was boring, really boring. - Like hard things, this is too easy. - Like classes with strong people (more interesting). - Cannot understand classmates- sick of them.
3	- Like to do uncommon things. - Guest was interesting.		
4			- No mood to study. - Tired, out all night with friends.
5			- Class easy, boring. - Cannot focus on these easy topics. - Going too slow.
6	- Although not motivated- I worked hard (need better grades to pass Grade 10).		
7			- Not difficult enough for me. - Game was boring.
8	- I like researching about diseases. - This topic is very interesting.		
9			- Although, I did several presentations about my chosen disease to different groups, they could not understand me. - I made it too easy for them.
10	Absent	Absent	Absent
11	- Better class. - Like listening tasks. - Hard listening task.		
12	Absent	Absent	Absent



Table 4.24: Tom: A Weak Male Student, (Grades), (Phase A)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O			O			O			O			
OX	OX	OX		OX	OX		OX	OX		OX	OX	OX
X												
Absent												

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class is fun and interesting.</li><li>- But, I am lazy to study today (and tired).</li><li>- This is a little bit too difficult for me (vocabulary).</li><li>- I am distracted .</li></ul>	
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The class environment is comfortable for me.</li><li>- Group members help me.</li><li>- The task is a little bit difficult for me.</li><li>- I am tired.</li></ul>	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interesting guest speaker.</li></ul>		
4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I understand this topic so I can write easily.</li><li>- This class is not too bad, and not too difficult for me today.</li></ul>	
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It's ok today.</li><li>- The group members help me.</li><li>- So many words I do not know (I am shocked).</li></ul>	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I can do today's topic.</li><li>- I am good today.</li></ul>		
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The classroom's environment is interesting today.</li><li>- This is too difficult for me because I do not have many ideas to make the sentences.</li></ul>	
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Working in the lab is fun and interesting .</li><li>- This task is too difficult for me.</li></ul>	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Classroom environment is fun.</li><li>- I like presenting about the disease and listening to other students.</li><li>- It's a good activity.</li></ul>		
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It is an interesting task.</li><li>- But a little bit difficult for me to write a report.</li><li>- I am tired.</li></ul>	
11		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The class environment is fun today</li><li>- I like working in the lab</li><li>- I could finish my report about a disease from last lesson</li><li>- I keep trying hard in the lab</li><li>- But I am tired because I have too much homework in other subjects</li><li>- Listening task is too difficult for me</li><li>- I cannot hear the words</li></ul>	

12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Class environment is interesting today</li><li>- I am able to keep trying in the lesson</li><li>- It is interesting to find out the ideas why students should wear uniforms</li><li>- I don't understand why students should not wear uniforms though</li><li>- The text is very difficult for me to read and understand</li></ul>	
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Table 4.25: Akio: A Weak Male Student, (Grades), (Phase B)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O		O	O		O	O		O	O	O	O	
OX	OX						OX					OX
X				X								
Absent												

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O
OX	OX											
X									X			
Absent												

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I am motivated because I know my health is not really good and I have to change my food balance.</li><li>- I enjoyed comparing with the others about their food health.</li><li>- But, I was not motivated, the pre-reading task was so boring and too long.</li></ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was motivated discussing in groups about dangers and that was really fun working in my group.</li><li>- I was excited that I was the first to find two dangers in the article.</li></ul>		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was motivated about English vocabulary test and learned many new vocabularies.</li><li>- I also was motivated about statistics and describe each graph.</li><li>- It was very fun to answer the blank words.</li></ul>		
4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Today, I could not motivated because I could not concentrate in class.</li><li>- I could not do anything and I was sleepy, too.</li><li>- I was also not motivated about grammatical writings, as I already learned these things.</li></ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listening activities were motivated.</li><li>- At first time, I listened very carefully because it was very difficult. I am so motivated to improve my skills.</li><li>- I was motivated with my score in the vocab test. I got 15/20.</li></ul>		



6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today, I was motivated about discussion and essay, also IGCSE summary exercise.</li> <li>- The summary was quite hard and demanding but I could concentrate and it was fun and very important for me.</li> </ul>		
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated about vocab test. It was quite easy and I could review.</li> <li>- In discussion, I was motivated, too, and I could think about agreement and disagreement, (important for me).</li> <li>- I was not motivated listening to "A" group's speaking. I could not understand them at all.</li> </ul>	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated today. It was difficult and hard to understand the text and also vocabulary was not easy, but I learnt so many things.</li> <li>- And I really motivated in discussion.</li> </ul>		
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I learnt some new vocabularies.</li> <li>- I also enjoyed working on sentences to make them into proper English.</li> </ul>		
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated about the topic, (dangers of working long hours).</li> <li>- I enjoyed my discussion with Akino and we worked well together to find solutions.</li> <li>- Also I had spelling test and got a good mark.</li> </ul>		
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was quite motivated because today we chose in class our topic for the test.</li> <li>- The topic was about career.</li> <li>- This topic is very interesting for me because I am seriously thinking about nursing, and I can research what I want to know for the test.</li> </ul>		
12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I enjoyed the matching words activity and the T/F activity.</li> <li>- But, I was not motivated when I got my essay grade. It was so low.</li> </ul>	
13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated about writing about career.</li> <li>- I wrote many things in this section and it was quite hard but I enjoyed it.</li> <li>- I was also not motivated because I could not do well on my vocab test. I have to improve.</li> </ul>	
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was so motivated practising listening, (I said I want to improve this before).</li> <li>- First listening, I did not write just listen.</li> <li>- Second listening, just concentrated.</li> <li>- After third listening, I started to write and answered all the questions.</li> <li>- It was such fun.</li> </ul>		

15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated writing letter. I still had some grammatical mistakes, but I learnt something.</li> <li>- I made some improvements today, by correcting my grammar on the second draft.</li> <li>- This process was a good achievement for me and helpful.</li> </ul>		
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated today because I was reading though the sentences and it was quite easy to understand.</li> <li>- When I was writing the CV it was not easy but I enjoyed doing it because it is really important.</li> <li>- In my own CV, I wrote my own good points. It was hard to explain but useful.</li> </ul>		
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated in the speaking test because I could explain about some of my own personal characteristics.</li> <li>- I really enjoyed knowing how much I could speak.</li> <li>- It was an interesting and useful test.</li> <li>- Although I was nervous, I think I did quite well.</li> </ul>		
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today, it was mainly learning things, (and no speaking), but it was really good and useful knowledge for me.</li> </ul>		
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We did spelling test, essay writing and brain storming. I also started my essay planning.</li> <li>- The article about developing countries was very difficult, but it was interesting.</li> </ul>		
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I learned many vocabularies on the knowing me, knowing you assessment.</li> <li>- I really enjoyed learning about my own personality and also about others' too.</li> </ul>		
21			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I was not motivated because I could not answer the questions.</li> <li>- I was also not satisfied in the test. I have to learn more vocab in this class and also at home.</li> </ul>
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was so motivated today because I learnt about what is the best fit for me in my future planning. It was a very good and useful experience.</li> </ul>		
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I enjoyed reading about aggressive, assertive and passive, it was so interesting.</li> <li>- The role play was so funny and good skills.</li> </ul>		
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I learnt some vocabularies and we read an interesting article about life.</li> <li>- Some words were hard, but it was interesting and I enjoyed it.</li> <li>- This was good practice in English.</li> </ul>		

Table 4.26: Yoon: A Weak Female Student, (Grades), (Phase B)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O	O						O			O	O	O
OX		OX	OX	OX	OX	OX		OX	OX			
X												
Absent												

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
O	O	O		O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O
OX												
X						X						
Absent			Absent									

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1	- I am motivated. We talked about other country's food and tested on am I healthy or unhealthy. This was an interesting topic for me.		
2		- The reading task was motivating and interesting. Working in gropus about the dangers was good and fun. I also enjoyed the comprehension check. - But, I was not motivated because I could not see the writing on the board very well. - Also, I need more time to write answers to numbers 1-8.	
3		- I was motivated because the vocabulary was little bit easy, (good) and also because I learnt to explain the graph, and I can understand all tasks. - The graph work is interesting and useful for me in my other classes. - I was also not motivated because I felt very bored.	
4		- I was motivated. We made our own graphs and described in groups, so I really liked it. - And I learn the vocab of trends. I can learn more vocab, I was motivated. - The grammar points on trends was really good. - But I was not motivated because the points were so good, but teacher always makes them so short and so fast. I need more explanation.	



5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listening activity on holistic medicine was very motivated. My listening is very poor so this was good for me.</li> <li>- I like this practice in class.</li> <li>- Also the topic is very useful and interesting.</li> <li>- But, I am not motivated because too much homework in English, and the vocab test is too much.</li> <li>- We planned for 10 words and the teacher suddenly changed it to 15.</li> </ul>	
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today we discussed essay and then reads a text. I was motivated reading text because I learnt new vocabulary and I was motivated learning all these new words.</li> <li>- But I was also not motivated, some words are big and some small. And the teacher goes so fast with them.</li> </ul>	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated. Although I didn't talk anything, it was funny and interesting.</li> <li>- Next discussion group speaking, I'll give my opinion.</li> <li>- The discussion topic was so interesting so I was motivated by this and the vocab test, because I did well. I am improving.</li> </ul>		
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated reading story. Today's classroom was normal.</li> <li>- Teacher still goes too fast and even today quickly erases what she wrote on the board before I could write it.</li> </ul>	
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated today I had a good word test and got a good score.</li> <li>- I liked the jumbled order activity, it's good for me and helps me.</li> <li>- T/F activity in groups was also really fun.</li> <li>- But, I not motivated because I am still having trouble keeping up.</li> <li>- I am getting behind on vocabulary, because the teacher writes so fast.</li> </ul>	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated. The word test was easy. I made only one mistake and got 9. I am happy.</li> <li>- Discussion about studying was so interesting. I like discussions so much.</li> <li>- The dangers of working conditions was so fun and today I really enjoyed all tasks.</li> </ul>		
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today we chose the topic for the speaking test. We all chose career so we chose our job each.</li> <li>- This was so interesting and useful for me.</li> <li>- The class was very interesting.</li> </ul>		

12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I studied vocab and teacher checked each student's essays one by one, and also the summary.</li> <li>- She explained which is good and bad and why. This was so interesting and not boring for me.</li> </ul>		
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated, the topic was about our character and our dreams was very interesting and teacher explained about the different types of characters.</li> <li>- On the questionnaire I could find my character and it was true.</li> <li>- Then we prepared for speaking test. I like the speaking test topic and today's class was so interesting.</li> </ul>		
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am learning how to listen well. I answered all the questions about listening. It was also an interesting topic.</li> </ul>		
15	Absent	Absent	Absent
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I learnt about what is CV. It is interesting and useful. I need this for my future.</li> <li>- Today's class was interesting.</li> </ul>		
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I did the speaking test.</li> <li>- I was very nervous before but after finish I was happy.</li> <li>- I prepared well and I can do this.</li> <li>- After finish the speaking test, I got to choose my own work which was interesting.</li> </ul>		
18			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All we did was learn new vocabulary.</li> <li>- It is hard and we filled in some blanks (very hard).</li> <li>- This is a little difficult for me and also very boring.</li> </ul>
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated. - I like writing essay and like today's class because I got some time to think about my essay.</li> </ul>		
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I was motivated. Ms. H explained about the reading exam and we studied self-assessment questionnaire.</li> <li>- It was so interesting. I wrote about myself, (so very interesting).</li> </ul>		
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated because today we had the reading comprehension test.</li> <li>- Some questions is a little bit difficult but I can do, and I am very happy.</li> </ul>		
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated, today we do about jobs. It is so interesting.</li> <li>- We also learnt some useful vocabulary.</li> </ul>		
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today we learned passive, aggressive and assertive, and I wrote a role play and we performed our role play.</li> <li>- It was so funny and interesting. I can do it and I learnt something good for teenagers.</li> </ul>		
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This semester really helped me improve my English skills.</li> </ul>		

Table 4.27: Midori: Another Weak Female Student, (Grades), (Phase B)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
O											O	
OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX	OX		OX
X												
Absent												

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
O	O				O			O		O	O	
OX		OX				OX	OX		OX			OX
X			X	X								
Absent												

Why?

Lesson	O	OX	X
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was motivated because talking about food of our country was fun. New topic is writing about our lives. I was very interested in this topic.</li><li>- But, I am not motivated, I could not understand the pre-reading task meaning like the others could.</li></ul>	
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The task is a little difficult for me, but that is good.</li><li>- Discussing about the dangers of life is interesting. Group members helped me and Akio taught me how to spell difficult words.</li><li>- I am able to stay focused. Recently, I came to like to learn English more than before.</li><li>- But I am not motivated because some words are difficult and there are medical language. It is too difficult for me and I do not understand.</li></ul>	
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- I was very sleepy today. I could not concentrate on the class and the questions.</li><li>- I tried to remember new words at last night, but I still got mistakes in the vocab test. I am not motivated, but I need to learn new words harder.</li><li>- But I was motivated because I learnt what past participle meant and I did not know how to say something before like this in English.</li></ul>	



4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The task was so nice. I felt it important to remember these vocabulary and I can improve my skill of speaking and hearing. I think these vocab is which is useful for my other subjects.</li> <li>- But, I am not motivated, I learnt too much vocabulary.</li> <li>- It is too difficult or me it remember all this and practice for test.</li> </ul>	
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The task was too difficult, vocab test was too difficult.</li> <li>- I studied all last night, new vocab.</li> <li>- But my score is still bad, I am worried and not motivated.</li> <li>- I must try to study for even longer and I need to apply the vocab in my essay.</li> <li>- Task 2 which is listening is toooooo difficult, speaking was very fast, I could not hear.</li> <li>- I am motivated, because I got some good new words and I can remember these.</li> </ul>	
6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because the "Apples and Pears" article is very interesting, and this is a very good topic for young people.</li> <li>- But, I was not motivated because I was very sleepy.</li> </ul>	
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I learnt something interesting from the article that being overweight is not always bad.</li> <li>- I enjoyed saying my opinions, and this discussion was really interesting.</li> <li>- But I was not motivated because my vocab score was not good and I cannot understand the speaking of Jack's group.</li> </ul>	
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I learnt quite difficult new vocabulary, and some words meanings are interesting. I want to use these for my essay, and I have to remember them for the test.</li> <li>- But I was not motivated because I was so sleepy, and I could not say my opinions in discussion. I felt really bad and I wanted to say something.</li> </ul>	
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated because I can learn about healthy things which include adult problems, and young people's problems during our English class. -These topics are really fun and interesting for me.</li> <li>- But, the vocab is too difficult form me. I always make mistakes. I really want to lose it and improve. I am worried about this. For example, I write each vocab out to remember in book but I cannot remember very well.</li> </ul>	

10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today's topic is very interesting. I discussed about studying time with Jo and the other group.</li> <li>- I found differences in studying times, maybe I start too late?</li> <li>- I am not motivated because I could not get good marks for test again. I am sad. I have to spend even more time studying.</li> </ul>	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I helped decide the topic for the speaking test. Actually, I wanted to do school uniform but I still also like career.</li> <li>- I am motivated and excited. I will do my best in the speaking test.</li> </ul>		
12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The task was really good. It was questions about psychology. I do not do this in other classes, and this topic is so interesting to me.</li> <li>- But, I am not motivated, my scores of essays are really not good. 5/8 for 2 criteria. Other students' scores are 7/8 and one student got 8/8!</li> <li>- I really want to improve.</li> </ul>	
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because of the topic of jobs. I like this topic. It was interesting that I was the only person who wants to be a teacher- I think it is a very great job.</li> <li>- I was really interested in this discussion about othe students' jobs, I could not believe 5 students wanted to be a kind of artist- this is not a good job!</li> </ul>		
14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was motivated because I could hear the details of the listening test. It was better than before for me. I can do it.</li> <li>- But I was not motivated because I was also so sleepy. I need to concentrate more.</li> </ul>	
15			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am preparing for my speaking test. It is not enough time for me and I am not motivated. My pronunciation is poor so I should care about that and I should speak clearly so teacher will understand.</li> <li>- I am not very good, I feel really bad.</li> </ul>
16			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I prepared for speaking test, whole time, but I did not do it today so I was not motivated.</li> <li>- I have got to wait till tomorrow and I am so afraid.</li> <li>- I will not be able to speak well because I will be tensed up.</li> </ul>
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I was motivated. I did speaking test. I was so afraid and very nervous but my feelings changed and I really enjoyed it.</li> <li>- Telling about myself was so interesting and my speaking was not bad.</li> <li>- I want to do more speaking like this, I am very happy.</li> </ul>		

18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated. I was enjoying learning vocabulary and reading the reading article. I learned a lot of vocab.</li> <li>- But I am not motivated because I will have a vocab test tomorrow.</li> <li>- I think they are quite difficult and too many. And I am worried, I want to get a good score.</li> </ul>	
19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today, I did vocab test and got 7/10 for the first time. (Not bad!).</li> <li>- But I am also not motivated, because I have never gotten 8 points and others have got that all the time.</li> <li>- Also I have not done my homework yet. I am worried, I have so much to do, I am getting behind.</li> </ul>	
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am motivated today. I learned explanation of my character.</li> <li>- There were useful words and sentences to describe me.</li> <li>- I will be able to use it when I introduce myself, (outside of school etc).</li> <li>- I will use these in the future.</li> </ul>		
21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I did a reading test. I was motivated because I could understand the details of this article.</li> <li>- I was also not motivated because there were some new words that I could not answer the meaning of. I have to know more words.</li> </ul>	
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I was so interested in this topic about job. I really liked it. There are still many jobs that I do not know, and I need to learn. It is so useful.</li> <li>- In fact, today I found a new and interesting job, (although I want to be a teacher), which is florist. This is so interesting and cute.</li> </ul>		
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I learned about a new and really interesting topic today which is assertive, passive and aggressive. I really want to know more about this.</li> <li>- This is helpful for myself now and in the future. I am passive and I need to learn to be assertive.</li> </ul>		
24		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Today I was mostly motivated. I could know more about myself, (the questionnaire).</li> <li>- I answered questions about myself and I got some advice from the quiz about my character. It was so interesting and useful. Most of them were correct about my character.</li> <li>- But, I was not motivated because I was so sleepy, and could not concentrate.</li> </ul>	



#### **4.4 L2 Motivation in Context and Multiple Realities (Phase A and Phase B)**

Finding 17: Motivation in this context could be characterised by multiple realities.

Data also illuminated the different types of multiple realities surrounding L2 motivation in these L2 classrooms. Any researcher, (whether adopting a qualitative, and/ or quantitative approach), researching L2 motivational issues perhaps needs to be particularly aware of, and sensitive to these.

With regards to the first set of participants, when data were triangulated, between the participants' journals, (Appendix C), and my field notes, (Appendix D), these data suggested that 9/10 of the participants had clearly given, (from my perspective), a fair, and realistic account in their journals about whether they were motivated, and/ or not motivated, as well as their L2 learning experiences in class, when compared with my observations of this. However, the data from one male participant's journal, (1/10 of the participants), was not corroborated by my account of his L2 learning behaviour, at all. Bobby, (a male participant from China), stated that he experienced 8 lessons with only positive influences, (O), 3 lessons with both positive and negative influences, (OX), and 1 lesson with only negative influences, (X). This meant that he was the participant who experienced the most lessons with only positive influences over the course of the quarter.

Data analysed at the start of the quarter, (from Questionnaire 1), about Bobby's "choice" motivation seemed to illustrate that he was a typical student in this international school context who valued English highly, that is, English was "very

important” to Bobby, (*Table 4.1*). Bobby also stated that he “puts in the most effort possible” in English classes for he needs English for his future career, to get money, and for travel purposes, thus illustrating his instrumental orientation, (*Table 4.1*). So far, it would appear that Bobby could be described as typical of those students found in this “Asian” context, with high expectancies of success with regards to English. However, Bobby’s “rhetoric” about his motivation, and behaviour in the classroom appeared to be very different from what I observed in the classroom. *Table 4.28* clearly highlights the radical differences between Bobby’s interpretations, (from his journal), and my interpretations of classroom events, from my field-notes. From my perspective, Bobby’s actual behaviour did not change much over the course of the quarter in that he typically demonstrated “off-task” behaviour on a consistent basis, whilst from his perspective he seemed to think that he was motivated, trying as hard as he could, and doing well in English. Given the action-oriented aspect of my investigation, this is the type of “multiple reality” that I could not accept uncritically, and had to seek to understand.



*Table 4.28: Bobby and the Multiple Realities Associated with L2 Motivation in Context, (Phase A)*

Lesson	O/OX/X	Bobby's Journal	My Field Notes
1	OX	I like English because I know it is very important. The task is a little boring and I have much pressure in this school.	Bobby is chatting, and laughing with Tom and Chan at the start of the lesson. During the first task, Bobby is doing nothing. With prompting, Bobby eventually has written 4 sentences. Whilst doing this Bobby is chatting in Mandarin with Chan. Other students have written 8 sentences in the same time. Bobby talks in Mandarin with others when he is supposed to be dictating his sentences.
2	O	The classroom environment is fine. I like to study English because I need it everywhere. The level is suitable for me. I like speaking English with the teacher and in the group.	Bobby sits right at the back of the class, chatting in Mandarin with Linda, and Tom. He is passive during the group work, and has to be prompted to read. He ends the lesson working with Tom whilst chatting in Mandarin, with his body slumped on the desk.
3	O	Today I enjoyed this lesson.	Bobby chats in Mandarin the whole way through the presentation, and is not following the directions to do "brain gym" exercises. When he gets into a group to read, he spends all his time chatting in Mandarin again.
4	O	Today's letter is not too hard for me because I got ready before class. It's good for improving my English.	Bobby is sitting right at the back of the class with Chan, chatting, and laughing in Mandarin, for a full 15 minutes at the start of the lesson. Bobby writes his letter at a slower pace than every other participant, with some initial prompting from the teacher to pick up his pen. His essay is poorly presented. Finishes the lesson staring into space, partly slumped over the desk.
5	OX	Today's lesson is not bad. Although the article is a little hard for me because it has too many words that I have not seen before.	The teacher starts off the new topic of malaria, and Bobby is sitting at the back of the classroom chatting, and laughing in Mandarin with Tom and Chan. Bobby does not contribute to his group to help come up with 3 statements about malaria. During the vocabulary exercise, Bobby is sitting alone, looking as if he is checking vocabulary but he has written nothing. Then they do reading. Bobby has to be prompted to read by Jenny.
6	OX	Today, although I am interested in the content it is too hard for me.	Bobby takes a place at the back of the class beside Chan. Whilst classifying the words with the teacher, Bobby does not contribute at all. Bobby talks in Mandarin with Chan whilst the class is doing this. Bobby is then told off by the teacher, and finishes the lesson doing the spelling quiz with the teacher. Bobby still finds time to move around the class, and talk to Tom and Chan in Mandarin.
7	O	It's very interesting today because it's not too difficult for me and not too boring.	Bobby is at the back again with Tom and a new student from Japan who does not speak any English or Mandarin. Teacher asks students to move into groups to play a vocabulary game. Bobby does not move at all, and stays talking with the group of Mandarin speakers. After prompting on several occasions by the teacher, Bobby writes the answers, but trails off in one direction to talk to Chan. There are 10 questions, some students are finished, Bobby is only on no. 4. Teacher tells Bobby to try harder as he did badly on an assignment. Bobby continues stretching, and yawning, not paying any attention to the teacher.



8	X	Today's event is not interesting because it has not enough time and it's hard to me.	Bobby is at the back of the class, chatting, and laughing in Mandarin with Chan and Tom. The teacher introduces that everyone is going to research about a disease in the computer lab, and gives them some questions to structure their enquiry. Bobby is one of the last students to choose a disease, and needs to be prompted by the teacher. Whilst other students are checking their dictionaries, Bobby is stretching out across the desk, doing nothing, except for making the occasional remark in Mandarin.
9	O	I enjoyed today because the presentation was more interesting.	Bobby seems to enjoy making a presentation to his classmates about the disease, although he is still talking in Mandarin whilst making the presentation, (to his friends). However, after the teacher shows the students how to structure the essay about the disease, building on the information from the last lesson, Bobby is doing virtually nothing. Other students start writing several paragraphs but Bobby is still on the first paragraph. Bobby has to be continually prompted by the teacher to keep working. Whilst working, he is still shouting out jokes, and comments in Mandarin to the other students.
10	O	I enjoyed today because it was important for my grade.	Bobby is chatting, and joking in Mandarin with Tom at the start of the lesson. Although Bobby has notes with him to help write the research report, he works slowly, chatting in Mandarin as he goes. "Good" students are on the 4 <sup>th</sup> paragraph, Bobby is only on the second.
11	O	Today is an interesting day because I could learn many knowledge about bird flu in class	Bobby sits right at the back with Chan. Teacher asks the students questions about bird flu. Bobby does not join in. Each student is to go to the board and write a research question. Bobby goes 11/12 students to the board, and has to be prompted by the teacher. Bobby is also in trouble for not finishing his last assignment, therefore he goes late to the lab. Once in the lab, Bobby sits together with Tom, and Chan chatting in Mandarin. Bobby cannot find a web-site, has no questions and has not even brought a pencil with him.
12	O	Today I tried my best because the content was a bit interesting and I knew that it was important	Bobby starts the lesson chatting, and laughing in Mandarin, with Fumiko, and Chan. He has no notes on his desk from the listening, like the other students. The topic then moves to school uniforms. Bobby does not join in the teacher initiated discussion at all.

After extensive talks as a researcher with Bobby, it seemed that he was suffering from what Deci & Ryan (1985) described as "amotivation", the state of lacking an intention to act. They postulated that this can come about from not valuing the activity, not feeling competent, or not believing the activity will yield the desired outcome, as set out in 2.2.3. In Bobby's case, he clearly valued English highly, and based on his cultural background could see that doing well in English would yield a highly desirable outcome. Therefore, it seemed that the only explanation was that he did not feel self-efficacious, and tried to hide this to perhaps "save face". Sadly, Bobby realised the importance of English to his family, and his society, and was all

too aware that he was letting them down, but unfortunately, being immersed in this English dominated context was just too stressful, and uncomfortable for Bobby, so he constantly sought out native speakers of Mandarin, acted the fool with them, and avoided focusing on learning English by taking a desk at the back, and/ or on the periphery of the classroom.

These data suggested that although individuals can understand very clearly what the values of their broader culture, and their family are, and in some respects they are influenced by them, as postulated by research, set out in 2.3, they still may not be riveted with them personally, thus showing that we do not always uncritically, and simplistically accept the values of our cultures, and/ or families. More research needs to be conducted about strategies to help students like Bobby who clearly see the value in English, but have an unrealistic view of what they have “signed up” for, and hence find it difficult to function once immersed in the international educational context over an extended time-frame.

With regards to the second set of participants, further aspects of the multiple realities associated with such a complex construct as L2 motivation surfaced, in other unexpected ways.

Due to the ethical considerations outlined in 3.2.6, (related to the fact that I was both the researcher, and the teacher of this L2 class), I was unable to analyse and interpret the data in tandem with collecting them, as I had done in the first phase. I therefore had absolutely no idea what the participants had written in Appendix A, (Questionnaire 1), Appendix B, (the set of four essays), and Appendix C,



(the journal). As I was writing my field-notes, and observing the participants' L2 learning behavior, and body language very carefully over the course of the semester, (possibly with more scrutiny than if I had been the standard class teacher), I was sure that I could predict how motivated, and/ or not motivated these participants were feeling based on my detailed observations, (Appendix D). I therefore conducted a mini-experiment which I thought might be of methodological interest. I wrote down, in rank order, my perceptions of the participants from the most motivated, to the least motivated, based on my in-depth observations in this L2 classroom at the end of the semester, (May 2007), before having examined the data collected. After all, a classroom teacher will typically base their reports of learners around more casual, and anecdotal observations than this.

I therefore documented that I perceived June, and Georgie to be the two most motivated participants, and Yoon, and Midori were the two least motivated participants, based on my interactions with them, and my observations of them over the course of the semester. It was therefore of great interest to discover through the data examined from the journals, that Yoon felt very motivated in her own mind, whereas I perceived her to be quite quiet, disinterested, passive, and relatively demotivated. With regards to June, I perceived her to be a "model student", really engaged in the lessons, and enjoying them, as she interacted with myself, and/ or her classmates, but clearly on reading her journal, inwardly, she was not feeling this way at all. In fact, she was constantly worried about not being able to keep up with her classmates, and/ or the amount of homework, not only in this L2 class but sometimes in other classes, too.



In addition, other interesting data came to light after reading the essays, and the journals highlighting the affective aspect of L2 learning, which clearly affected L2 motivation, and further highlighted different types of multiple realities in this classroom. My observations of these participants' behavior, and/ or body language in this class led me to believe that these learners were happy, and stress-free. However, it became clear just how emotionally affected some participants could sometimes be by L2 learning in general, and the events, and happenings in this class.

One male participant wrote:

“Sometimes I could cry. English is a barrier stopping me from being all I can be”.

Derek, 16, Korea.

With regards to specific activities in my class, after a listening activity, a male participant stated:

“I try to face my life and everything in a positive way, but I still feel frustrated inside and could cry about my poor English, especially this listening activity”.

Jack, 17, Taiwan.

A female participant stated:

“When speaking in class, I can hardly say anything and I feel nervous even if I have already thought out what I want to say. I should not be so scared.

Anne, 18, China.

And:

“When I talk in class, I have to think how to show my emotions in English then to say it, this is hard and frustrating”.

Tiffany, Taiwan, 17.

In sum, all of the above described data from both sets of participants showed how L2 motivation is surrounded by multiple realities in context, which need to be understood, if one’s investigation has an action-oriented aspect.

#### **4.5 L2 Motivation in Context and Some Methodological Issues (Phase A and Phase B)**

Even although my investigation utilised qualitative measures did not mean that I should neglect, and/ or ignore interesting methodological issues related to the traditional L2 quantitative approach. After all, I may wish to adopt a quantitative approach at some point in the future, depending on the nature, and focus of my investigation. Therefore, I reflected upon some of the traditional L2 self-report measures described in 2.2.1, in the light of some of my findings.

Firstly, my findings indirectly showed that to measure the amount of motivation that an individual has to learn English, by asking them at the start of a course, and detached from the situation-specific context, as the traditional L2 self-report measures do, may not realistically capture how much motivation an individual actually has in response to the happenings, and events in the classroom. For example, data showed, (*Table 4.23*), that if Edward, (a male participant from Mongolia in the first set of participants), had filled in one of these traditional L2 self-reports about his motivation at the start of the quarter, he would no doubt have scored relatively highly, because it would have captured his general motivation to English. At the start of the quarter, Edward valued education highly in general, and learning English in particular. But, once immersed in the English lessons in this international school, the experience fell short of his expectations, from the outset, no doubt in part because he had previously been taught English in the traditional Russian educational system. Therefore, he became seriously “demotivated”, and negative about English once immersed in the class. So, the situation-specific aspect of his motivation would not be reflected in the data collected in one of these L2 self-report measures. And, although, perhaps Edward



is an isolated case, it still illustrates how individuals cannot necessarily report on their motivation, detached from the situation-specific context.

Secondly, building on the previous point, and more specifically with regards to effort, (which is a key component of the operationalisation of motivation in the traditional L2 self-report measures), individuals may only be able to give information in a general, and non-specific way about the typical amount of “effort” they would usually make, but they would not be able to predict how their effort would be affected by the specific happenings, and events in the specific L2 classroom. For example, at the start of the quarter, Edward reported to make “the most effort possible”, (*Table 4.1*), but once immersed in the class, by his own admission, this was not the case.

Thirdly, building further on the previous point, individuals may not actually be able to report accurately on how much effort they will put in, in a situation-specific context either. Data examined in my investigation raised questions about whether some of these participants would be able to report accurately on the amount of effort they put in to learning English on a Likert scale. With regards to weaker performers, in the *first set* of participants, Bobby, (*Table 4.28*), and Chan, (*Table 4.22*), who both failed the L2 course, stated that they put in “the most effort possible”, (*Table 4.1*). On the other hand, Jenny, (*Table 4.16*), and Ken, (*Table 4.17*), reported that they put in “an average amount”, but data showed that they were the highest performing students, in this L2 class, (*Table 4.1*). In addition, with regards to better performers, in the second set of participants, Georgie, (*Table 4.19*), Suc and Brian, (*Table 4.2*), all reported that they put in “an average amount”, (*Table 4.2*). These data showed that participants of different abilities seemed to report on effort in a way that is entirely

self-referenced against their own standards, and therefore interpreted in their own individual way. These findings therefore raised methodological issues associated with measuring essentially qualitative constructs on a Likert scale, in this context.

Finding 18: Researchers should attempt to triangulate data where possible, by utilising behavioural corollaries to back up participants' self-reports in motivational research.

Throughout this investigation, I have questioned the extent to which individuals could self-report on how much effort they put into learning English. I therefore suggested, in line with other researchers, for example, Murphy & Alexander (2000) that self-reports should perhaps be linked to behavioural corollaries, that is, additional sources, for example, data from parents, and/ or teachers, (as my investigation did), as also suggested by Martin (2008).

After all, all of the above described findings illustrate how important it is to triangulate data about motivational issues. If any of the above learners had been part of a large sample, and filled in just an L2 self-report measure as introduced in 2.2.1, we could assume that the information they would give, (based on the data they had given in my investigation), would contribute anomalies. Therefore, those researchers adopting self-report measures should consider the issues that I have raised carefully, and address them by collecting data from other sources, that is, parents, and/ or teachers etc, about the participants' so-called L2 motivation, if it is not realistic for them to link the general L2 motivation to the situation-specific L2 motivation because of the large numbers involved in their investigation.

As Schunk (2000) pointed out “how we define the constructs influences which measures we use to assess them and how we interpret out research results” (p. 116). It is therefore of great interest that in the related field of SRL, Zimmerman (2008) has drawn attention to the fact that self-reports are also often incongruous with trace measures of self-regulatory processes when studied in a specialised learning environment, as introduced in 2.2.1, showing methodological parallels between different types of research.

And, interestingly enough, whilst self-reports should perhaps be accompanied by behavioural corollaries, based on my experiences with the second set of participants, it was also interesting to note that observations should always be compared to self-reports from the participants, before accepting uncritically your view as the reality of the classroom. After all, there might be a difference between the teacher’s, and students’ reality, as shown with regards to the second set of participants.

Even although some might argue that triangulation eschews the notion of multiple realities, my position was that given the action-oriented aspect of my investigation, I could not just accept these differences uncritically, but seek to understand them, in order to access the most balanced motivational picture possible, in order to refine, and improve my professional practice.



#### 4.6 Conclusions about the “Postdecisional” Stage (Phase A and Phase B)

My findings showed that researchers should be careful not to take at face value that how participants report to value English, or how much effort they report to put into learning English, (4.2), will translate in a straightforward, and unproblematic way into situation-specific motivation, and/ or achievement in the L2 classrooms, as data from 4.3.1/2/3 subsequently illustrated. The key, and puzzling L2 motivational conundrum presented in these findings is that even when the participants believed that effort was key to L2 learning success, or that English was very important, they still did not necessarily put in the most effort possible, by their own admission. That is precisely why it is important in research terms to focus on the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation to understand why this comes about.

Therefore, by putting the spotlight onto the situation-specific context of the L2 classrooms, my investigation was able to build up an in-depth understanding about the differences that can sometimes be manifested between the general motivation to learn English, (the “predecisional” stage), and the L2 motivation when faced with the happenings, and events in the L2 classrooms, from the perspective of teenagers, the “postdecisional” stage.

These findings illustrated that when we say “L2 motivation”, we must be clear what we mean by that, that is, do we mean the general motivation to learn English, or the situation-specific L2 motivation when faced with the happenings, and events in the classrooms?

Whilst I was not able to provide evidence that showed how the situation-specific aspect of motivation eventually affected the general motivation to learn English in positive or negative ways, my findings still illustrated the importance of focusing on the factors that are affecting the motivational quality of the learning process in the classrooms. After all, from the perspective of teenagers, perhaps L2 motivation was as much a feature and outcome of the L2 classrooms in this context, as it was an attribute of themselves.

Therefore, my findings highlighted L2 motivation's dynamic, and fluid nature in the situation-specific context, from the perspective of teenagers. These supported Dornyei & Otto's (1998) definition that L2 motivation is "the dynamically changing arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out" (p. 65) as set out in 1.1, and Maehr & Braskamp's (1986) definition that it is "a dynamic process. Personal investment occurs as part of a continuous stream of ever-changing events" (p.10).

These findings were subsequently utilised to reflect upon how I could refine, and improve my professional practice in order to support L2 learners more in this context, (action-oriented), (Chapter 5).

## **Chapter 5 Refining and Improving My Professional Practice in the Light of my Findings (Action-oriented)**

### **5.1 Building upon the Findings: Potential Strategies**

In 1.2, I stated that part of the purpose of my investigation was to refine, and improve my professional practice. “Reflecting-on-action”, I identified some practical strategies which could now be incorporated into my regular teaching repertoire in my L2 classroom, in order to help support learners.

My findings from the second phase of the investigation underlined the importance of listening to students, to find out not only about their cognitions, but also their responses to the happenings, and events in the classroom, on an ongoing basis. Professor Jean Rudduck at the University of Cambridge, UK, spearheaded a campaign for student voice, (see [www.consultingpupils.co.uk](http://www.consultingpupils.co.uk) for more details). Rudduck (1996) stated “Pupils’ accounts of experience should be heard and should be taken seriously in debates about learning” (p. 2). In fact, support for student consultation has come from many different sources, including, for example, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, in particular, Article 12. An oft-repeated refrain from teachers is “But I listen to children anyway! (Bragg, 2007, p. 505). However, although we might well listen to them on a day-to-day basis, we still may not know, or understand about the key motivational issues related to language learning that our students are experiencing, from their perspective.

For example, with regards to the learners’ cognitions, my findings, (1 to 9), illustrated that as typical L2 classroom teachers, we probably do not know very much



about how they value English, (Finding 1), or whether they are instrumentally, and/ or integratively oriented, (Finding 2), or why they would report to value English highly, yet not put effort into it, (Finding 3). Furthermore, we often assume, (in an uncritical fashion), that all learners enjoy studying in an international school, and we do not reflect upon some of the ambivalent feelings that some of them, (particularly those who do not perform well in grades), clearly experience, (Finding 4). In fact, anecdotal evidence suggests that we would find it hard to even list what they perceived to be the disadvantages, (Finding 9). Neither do we think about how some learners who perform well, (in grades), might be rather dissatisfied with their perceived performance, and in fact, quite frustrated by it, (Finding 5). We probably do not know either if our learners have goals, and if so, what they are, (Finding 6). Neither would we know whether they perceived effort or ability to be more important, (Finding 7). And, neither would we realise the extent to which the ways they were thinking had been influenced by aspects of their society, and culture, (Finding 8).

And, with regards to the ongoing happenings, and events in the classroom, my investigation also showed that as teachers, we could not predict what types of “motivational imbalances” between learners would surface by normal observations of our class. In fact, in my context, Finding 15 illustrated how many of the participants responded in slightly different ways to the same events, and happenings in the classrooms.

My findings pointed to ways by which I could find out more about how the learners are thinking.

I noted that Bragg's (2007) idea of "buzz groups" for use in school in general could be adapted for use in my classroom, as these groups might be useful to find out about the learners' cognitions. The learners could move around the classroom to express what their sets of beliefs, and values were about L2 learning, either by writing them down or saying them, and this technique would mean that all L2 learners could express their views, even if not verbally, which would be important for some of the learners in this context who prefer to write rather than speak. Learners who liked to speak could also take part in focus group interviews. This would enable me as a teacher to raise awareness about how their thinking could affect their motivation, and learning, whilst enabling the learners to reflect upon their sets of beliefs, and values, and understand their peers' differing perspectives.

In addition, I could give the learners opportunities to debrief about where they were in L2 learning on regular occasions, that is, through informal group, and/ or individual chats, or by way of a journal, (like **Appendix C** in Phase A, and Phase B). This would be useful to find out about their responses to the happenings, and events in the classroom. This strategy would not only provide invaluable information for me for curriculum planning, but it would also provide further opportunities to raise awareness of more L2 motivational issues, on an ongoing basis. This would be of particular importance for students like Bobby, (*Table 4.28*), and Chan, (*Table 4.22*), who clearly were not coping with the demands of the course, (and life in an international school in general). And also for students who were performing well in grades, but who in some ways managed to disguise their feelings of dissatisfaction, and frustration, for example, Georgie, (*Table 4.19*). In fact, some participants in the second phase had even reported to be nervous when speaking in front of others in the



class, and they were often made to feel sad by certain affective factors related to L2 learning. These debriefing sessions may therefore enable them to raise some of their concerns with me, and/ or fellow classmates. Furthermore, I could incorporate the idea of a suggestion box as recommended by Bragg (2007) in which learners could write about any language learning concerns they had, and I could then provide them with the necessary on-going support.

It would be important to address the fact that the learners in this particular context, responded to the same events, and happenings in class in slightly different ways.

In my classrooms, a useful overarching strategy might therefore be to “personalise” the learning, as advocated by the Specialist Schools Trust (2004). This general approach to learning is defined as a “vision in which every school’s provision is shaped around the needs, aptitudes and interests of individual students” (2004, p. 9). Felner et al. (2007) also stated that “personalising” the learning is a central goal of efforts to transform America’s schools.

With regards to the learners’ cognitions, my findings showed that I would have to adopt a two-pronged approach. Firstly, I would have to address the negatives in their ways of thinking, (if there were indeed any), and secondly, support, and reinforce the positives. So, with regards to the former, I could make a more concerted effort to help learners’ address their language learning problems, (for example, by introducing learner strategies, goal-setting strategies, and motivational strategies into my classes, to assist academically weaker learners, as well as other strategies, (see motivational interviewing technique discussed later), for all types of learners who display



ambivalence in language learning. This would be appropriate not only for students who were not performing well in terms of grades, but also for students who were, but were still dissatisfied, and frustrated with their performance. With regards to academically stronger students, I could also build upon, and strengthen their adaptive motivational orientations. After all, in this context, my findings illustrated that the learners valued English highly, and believed effort to be more important than ability. Therefore, I could continually put much more emphasis on the importance of effort, rather than ability or talent, in the teacher talk sessions in my classes, as postulated by Blackwell et al. (2007), and which I had not done before. I would now set out to ensure that the learners believed that competence was a changeable, and controllable aspect of language learning development, from the outset of my courses. And, by means of the regular debriefing sessions, I could focus on finding out more about what my investigation showed to be possibly one of the most puzzling findings, that is, why some participants reported that they did not put in the most effort possible, even though they stated it was so important.

With regards to their responses to the happenings, and events in my classes, it seems important to focus carefully upon what factors affect the situation-specific aspect of their motivation. Finding 10 showed that motivation in the L2 classrooms was characterised by a degree of flux, and volatility. I could therefore start by determining whether my students were motivated, or not, at different time points, and over time. After all, as teachers who teach in an “Asian” context, we might not necessarily know whether our students are motivated or not, just by observing them, as my findings showed in the second phase. I could therefore plot, and track the development of this situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation over time in my

classes, as I did in my investigation, by asking the learners to keep journals, then examining the data by utilising the coding system, employed in my investigation, (4.3.1). This need not solely be done by me, but could as easily be done by the learners, for a project, for example, or by a simple computer programme. After all, my findings showed that my students really enjoyed journaling about their classroom experiences. And, as shown by Finding 16, motivation in context does not necessarily develop in a cumulative way, from their perspective.

Finding 11 illustrated that from the participants' perspective, motivation in the classrooms was seriously impacted upon in both positive, and negative ways, by the skills, tasks, and/ or activities involved. And, as such, I, as the teacher need to become more aware of the multitude of different effects that specific skills, tasks, and/ or activities potentially have on different learners.

In fact, my findings specifically showed that I would have to ensure that the skills, tasks, and/ or activities were: interesting and relevant for teenagers. This would include choosing interesting resources, and incorporating as much technology as possible. For example, my findings showed that the participants were all really motivated, from their perspective, when using the computer/ Internet in Lesson 8 in the first phase, and Lesson 11 in the second phase. In addition, when topics were presented in novel ways, (for example, the presentation/ demonstration by the guest speaker about brain gym in Lesson 4 in the first phase), the learners' interest seemed to be triggered, (4.3.3). Theoretically, this concern for relevance comes from interest research which has suggested that students are more interested in doing activities they can connect to their own experiences, (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). By building up



in-depth understanding about which key skills, tasks, and/ or activities are relevant, meaningful, and enjoyable for the learners over time, I might potentially be able to not only “capture”, but also “hold” their situational interest, as well as develop their emerging individual interest into well-developed interest, (the fourth stage of the model), as postulated by Hidi & Renniger (2006).

On reflection, with regards to the resources, it would be especially important to pay more attention than I had typically done in the past, to providing better quality materials in my classroom that were varied, different, and not inauthentic, and formulaic. I should not be so dependent upon core textbooks, and seek to find texts about some of the key topics covered, in magazines, journals, newspapers or through computer web-sites, to add variety to my classes. Auditory, and video resources could also be used more effectively to give further variety, for example, documentaries about diseases or careers. After all, my findings showed that diseases, and careers were both popular topics, (4.3.3). Clearly, the choice of resources does play an important role in delivering an interesting, stimulating, and relevant curriculum. In addition, as Durik & Harackiewicz (2007) have pointed out, collative features of the materials could be used to capture the interest of students who are not really interested in the first place, which would be relevant with regards to the types of learners in the first phase.

Perhaps it would be helpful in my classes to let the learners choose topics, (within reason). In fact, practices emphasising personal choice are stressed by self-determination theory. Ryan & Deci (2002) argued that students need to become autonomous learners who take control of their own learning. My investigation also



showed that learners in different class streams within a grade level, and even learners in the same class, have different views about what types of topics are interesting, and/or of their personal utility. Therefore, I could ask learners to vote on the types of topics that most interest them at the start of the learning period, and back this up with authentic, and meaningful materials to which they could relate. After all, as shown in my findings, when the participants in my investigation had a degree of choice with regards to the skills, tasks, and/or activities, they reported to be more motivated, (for example, in Lesson 8 in the first phase, and in Lesson 23 in the second phase). These findings were in line with research which has shown that if a range of skills, tasks, and/or activities is offered, the participants may generally choose those best suited to their learning style or preference, and/or multiple intelligences (Smith & Dalton, 2005, p. 19).

Linking to other research, one possible strategy that might be useful, for not only facilitating choice, but also for ensuring that relevant, meaningful, and enjoyable skills, tasks, and/or activities are selected for the learners, could be to gather information about their learning styles, and/or multiple intelligences, at the start of the learning period. This could be especially important in the L2 classrooms in my context since we are dealing with linguistically, and culturally diverse learners who have up until recently, typically learned in radically different ways from the IBO framework in a variety of Asian national educational systems, as my findings clearly showed, with regards to the second set of participants, (4.2.5).

However, with regards to learning styles, Coffield, Moseley, Hall & Ecclestone (2004) postulated that although there is strong intuitive appeal in the idea that

teachers should pay closer attention to students' learning styles, these seemingly clear, and simple messages have too often "been distilled from a highly contested field of research" (p.118). Even so, this still encourages me to reflect upon my own teaching style, since clearly one's general teaching style affects the skills, tasks, and/ or activities that one chooses, and subsequently the manner in which one delivers them. My teaching style placed more focus on writing, and grammar/ vocabulary, and made quick transitions between activities, making students catch up for homework, if they got slightly behind. It was interesting to note through my examinations of the participants' journals, that many of the participants felt I was going too fast with very difficult activities. Some also found there to be too much homework, and they wanted more time to complete activities, on their own in my class. Sternberg's (1997) opinion might no doubt be that I was typically teaching to my own strengths, and not necessarily to those of my students. And in fact, on reflection, I was actually teaching how I had been taught at school, which was puzzling given all the teacher training I have undergone over the years. I was reverting to a default position, (in teaching terms). As Sternberg & Grigorenko (1999) pointed out, it is often not what is being taught but how it is being taught that is important in classrooms. My investigation showed me that perhaps I needed to capitalise on the learners' strengths more, not teach around my own perceived strengths, and thus remain in my own comfort zone, (in teaching terms).

With regards to multiple intelligences, research has also been done which highlights the effectiveness of incorporating it into L2 classrooms. "Project Summit" is a research project linked to the original "Project Zero" conducted at Harvard School of Education, USA, which identifies, documents, and promotes effective applications



of Multiple Intelligences in schools. Of particular interest is Haley's (2004) study which showed that L2 learners did achieve greater success rates when MI theory was implemented in their L2 classrooms. Haley (2004) therefore stated the importance of using MI theory to shape, and inform instructional strategies, curriculum development, and alternative forms of assessment to cater for the needs of culturally, and linguistically diverse L2 learners. In fact, Haley (2004) believed that given what we know about the educational needs of L2 learners, all teachers must be better equipped to widen their pedagogical repertoire to accommodate diverse L2 learners, and my findings in this context supported this position. I could utilise the checklist from Armstrong's (1993) "Seven Kinds of Smart" to identify general characteristics of each student's intelligence profile, as suggested by Haley (2004).

However, I should offer one very important caveat in relation to the above-mentioned points: it would be important for me as the teacher in these classrooms to reflect carefully on what would be a healthy balance between what most interests the learners, and giving them choice on the one hand, and on the other, the IBO mandated MYP English (Grade 10) curriculum, with focus on the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and the stipulated criterion-referenced assessment standards in these areas, (equally weighted), which must be both internally, and externally moderated for the whole year group, at different points of the course, and over the whole course. However, as long as I kept these external standards in mind, I could still allow the students to collaborate with each other, and myself, to choose suitable skills, tasks, and/or activities which were related to the course but which learners regarded as interesting, and/ or of utility, (within these clearly defined parameters).



My findings also showed that I needed to find out more than I had previously done in the past, about whether the learners perceived themselves to be able to do the skills, tasks, and/ or activities, (Finding 12). Bandura (1997) posited that students' self-efficacy comes primarily from successfully completing achievement activities. My findings showed that the participants seemed eager to perceive themselves to be able to do the skills, tasks, and/ or activities, whether they were high performing students or not, (in grades). This finding illustrated that I should always find out about the level of difficulty students perceive themselves able to cope with at the start of a course, in order to select skills, tasks, and/ or activities that catered to their needs, (within the framework of the IBO programme), and hence promote feelings of self-efficacy.

In fact, once I had found out about their position on this matter, I could adjust the level of difficulty of the lessons accordingly. Of course, some might argue that this approach would lead to an underestimation of the learners' potential. However, if I found out that they preferred doing really easy skills, tasks, and/ or activities, I could gradually build up to harder skills, tasks, and/ or activities over the course of the learning period, whilst discussing these issues with the learners on a regular basis. This issue of finding the right skills, tasks, and activities to meet the learners' needs is possibly one of the most challenging issues teachers will have to ever deal with. For example, with regards to the first phase of my investigation, a male participant, Edward, (*Table 4.23*), was initially interested in, and committed to, learning English, but soon seemed to come to the conclusion that the class did not measure up to his expectations of how difficult the skills, tasks, and/ or activities should be for Grade 10. Therefore, he rapidly developed a maladaptive motivational orientation, from the

start of the learning period. On the other hand, Chan, (*Table 4.22*), felt that the very same skills, tasks, and/ or activities were too difficult for him, and also developed a maladaptive motivational orientation, for these different reasons. Furthermore, my findings also showed that there may be anomalies in learners' views about self-efficacy issues, perhaps especially with regards to high performing learners, (in grades). For example, my second set of participants reported that they were predominantly not satisfied with their proficiency in English, and many stated that they wanted to speak perfect English, like native-speakers. Yet, they still wanted to be able to do the skills, tasks, and activities, and did not ones that were too difficult. As a teacher, the skill would seem to lie in attempting to reconcile these ambivalent positions, through group discussions etc. So, I should set out to plan skills, tasks, and/ or activities that would help all the different types of learners achieve what they set out to achieve, from their perspective, and not demoralise any of them in the process, whilst at the same time, maintaining the IBO standards. From now on, I am going to be mindful that favourable self-conceptions of L2 competence should be promoted by providing regular experiences of success, and emphasizing what learners can do, rather than not do.

Even although my findings showed that the majority of the participants in this context had a "growth mindset" in which they believed effort was more important than ability, (4.2.3), it seems necessary to continually help the learners develop this further, by reinforcement, through focus groups, debriefing sessions, and workshops. Blackwell et al. (2007) came up with the idea of a "growth mindset" workshop, (which makes learners reflect on the importance of effort), and recently developed a computer-based programme called "Brainology". This type of computer programme



which develops “growth mindsets” may be suitable for these learners who clearly enjoyed using computers, and I could ask my school to investigate this, with a view to using it in our context in the near future.

Related to self-efficacy, is the issue of the reward structure in the classrooms, which my findings showed could perhaps be utilised in a more effective way. Examination of the second set of participants’ journals seemed to highlight the dominance of the same tests, (vocabulary), in my classroom, hence motivating some, but demotivating others. Achievement research stresses the importance of social comparison processes, and my findings illustrated that self-processes are not just affected by individual achievements in isolation from others (Bandura, 1986). In fact, negative ability-related social comparisons, as seen in the data in the second phase of my investigation, could lower the observers’ self-efficacy (Ames, 1992). Some participants, for example, Midori (*Table 4.27*) felt sad that they studied very hard, and still did not do as well as some of their counterparts. It may be helpful to explore in my further work the use of more varied tests, of different skills, and also give grades for attitude, and engagement, giving all learners opportunities to demonstrate their own particular strengths. In addition, I could encourage “mindsets” in which one sets out to beat one’s own personal best, as opposed to making comparisons with others.

My findings suggest that it is important to understand the multiple realities associated with motivation in context, (Finding 17), in order to promote shared realities in my classroom, in order to facilitate adaptive motivational orientations in the learners. After all, as teachers, we cannot accept multiple realities uncritically, because it is part of our role to communicate the required standards of the programme



to the learners, hence mediating shared realities in the classrooms. This is especially important in my context, where many of the learners, will not have studied in this type of school environment before, and need to learn about what is required if they wish to be successful in academic, (and social), terms. But this highlights the complicated educational issue related to standards which has been discussed throughout this section, and which many L2 teachers in this context, and perhaps in other contexts too, will no doubt be aware of. Therefore, I would have to use my debriefing sessions to explain to the learners what kind of expectations, and standards are required in the course, whilst at the same time listening to what their expectations are, and in light of this, continually attempt to reconcile the two positions.

On reflection, I would also have to think more carefully about how to facilitate positive interactions in my classrooms. It seemed that the first set of participants, could potentially be more affected in both positive, and negative ways by interactions with others, than the second set, (Finding 13). I will need to reflect more on what types of configurations of learners are most effective in L2 classrooms in motivational terms. I therefore have decided that I will typically provide opportunities for my students to choose between working on their own, in pairs, or in a group. Of course, this is not to say that learners' choices might not have to be modified on occasion, in order to develop their abilities to work in different configurations, but this would at least provide some degree of flexibility. For example, data showed that with regards to the first set of participants, some appeared not to benefit from working in groups. In Lesson 2, Edward felt demotivated by working in some groups, (*Table 4.23*), and in Lesson 1, Ken, also felt demotivated working in his group because he felt that members did not help him, (*Table 4.17*). Whilst it could be argued that it is not the

group work that is the real issue, but the L2 learning behaviour of individuals in the group, for these two participants, the reality was that they experienced negative influences in these group situations in this classroom. If a language course continually incorporates working in configurations that the learners do not find motivating, for whatever arbitrary, and random reasons, it may eventually become difficult for them to maintain their motivation, over time. Related to this aspect, I could also identify whether the learners are more teacher-led or independent learners, at the start of the course, in order to adapt my lessons accordingly, whilst gradually introducing what they were less comfortable with over time. In addition, my findings showed that with regards to the second set of participants, when I was conducting the speaking test outside of the classroom over two lessons, many participants reported to be really motivated by being able to work on their own, and/ or choose what they wanted to work on. This is in line with Bragg's (2007) position that children value independent time highly, and can articulate powerful arguments about its benefits.

I also noted that motivation could make a difference to achievement, for example, with regards to Jenny, Ken, and Linda in the first phase, (*Tables 4.16, 4.17, and 4.18, respectively*). In addition, my findings also showed, unsurprisingly, that lack of motivation could perhaps partly account for poor grades, for example, with regards to Chan, and Bobby in the first phase, (*Tables 4.22, and 4.28, respectively*). But even so, it may not always be linked to achievement, (in grades), and in fact, may be more of an antecedent of behaviour, (Finding 14). But, in many ways, even if motivation is not linked to achievement in all cases, it still really matters, because this promotes a sense of well-being, and happiness in students. For example, for some participants, (in the second phase), high levels of situation-specific motivation did not necessarily



lead to high achievement, (in grades), for example, Akio, Yoon, and Midori, (see *Tables 4.25, 4.26, and 4.27, respectively*), but they were still really positive, and engaged learners in the classroom. Such findings suggest that motivation should not only be used to facilitate good grades, but also to promote a happy, and positive atmosphere in class. I will now seek to ensure that the social aspect of motivation is not overlooked in my classroom.

Throughout the above discussion, I have proposed integrating a core set of motivational principles into my teaching, based on several key theories which were introduced in **Chapter 2**, namely, Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory, and Interest research, in a "personalised" way, in order to refine, and improve my professional practice. With regards to Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, in the field of L2 research, there has been much emphasis on developing intrinsic motivation, and learner autonomy in L2 classrooms, (see 2.2.3). But my findings showed that in my context, perhaps a less prescriptive way to utilise this theory would be a better starting point. For example, rather than setting out to develop "intrinsic" motivation, or "learner autonomy" in all students at all times, it may be a more effective approach to start by finding out what type of motives the learners have in the first place, for example, are they intrinsically, and/ or extrinsically oriented. Then, once knowing more about their orientations, attempt to build on and develop them, by creating the classroom conditions that would support, not thwart, their natural inclinations. This approach therefore does not force a certain so-called "superior" motivational orientation on the students, in an unreflective fashion, but seeks to understand how best to support their natural motivational orientations. After all, my findings showed that although the first set of



participants demonstrated intrinsic motivation, this did not necessarily enable them to achieve high grades, as theirs was a type of intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation, as suggested by Vallerand (1997). Perhaps as a teacher, I could attempt to develop more adaptive forms of extrinsic motivation, in these type of learners through my debriefing sessions in which I would try to encourage them to accept regulation through identification, which Deci & Ryan (1985) classified as the third type of extrinsic motivation. In fact, promoting more active, and volitional (versus passive, and controlling), forms of extrinsic motivation should now become part of my pedagogical repertoire. In short, I could not build on, and reinforce learners' natural motivational orientations, unless I knew what they were in the first place. Ultimately, by taking this approach, I may be better placed to support learners' natural inclinations for autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

As mentioned in 2.2.3, Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory is also linked to motivational interviewing which is defined as "a client-centred directive method for enhancing intrinsic motivation to change by exploring, and resolving ambivalence" (Miller & Rollnick, 2002, p. 25). On reflection, it seemed that this interviewing technique may be suitable for adaptation to language learning in my classes, in order to help learners resolve the ambivalence that my findings highlighted to be part of language learning in this context. For example, although the majority of participants valued English, they sometimes did not put in the most effort possible. In addition, some participants were not comfortable in an international environment, although they understood the benefits. In fact, some who were actually doing poorly in terms of grades, and attitude, for example, Bobby, and Chan, (*Tables 4.28, and 4.22, respectively*), may particularly benefit from this technique, as well as others who

were doing well in terms of grades, but still had a negative attitude about their proficiency level.

The reason this technique may be particularly relevant for use in my classes would seem to centre around its claim that attempting to directly persuade an individual to change will be ineffective because it entails taking one side of the conflict which the individual is already experiencing. In fact, on reflection, as a language teacher, my typical response to learners who are not doing well, (in terms of grades), is to immediately put pressure on them to change, by firstly, directly telling them to do so, and then when this does not work, by making them do extra work, and eventually after no improvement, resort to forms of punishment, for example, detention, to “motivate” them. But, as Russell in Covington (1992) pointed out, strategies of intensification might not be the answer. After all, the consequence of this approach could be that an individual may adopt the opposite stance, arguing against the need for change, thereby resulting in increased resistance, and a reduction in the likelihood of change, (Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Miller, Benefield & Tonigan, 1993; Rollnick & Miller, 1995). Instead, motivational interviewing allows individuals to overtly express their ambivalence, in order to guide them to a satisfactory resolution of their conflicting motivations, with the aim of triggering appropriate behavioural changes. Motivational interviewing involves four basic principles. Firstly, counsellor “empathy” is crucial in providing the conditions necessary for a successful exploration of change, (language learning change, in this instance), to take place. Secondly, discrepancy has to be developed. This involves exploring the pros, and cons of the individual’s (language learning) behaviour, and of changes to current (language learning) behaviour, in order to generate or intensify an awareness of the

discrepancy between the individual's current (language learning) behaviour, and their broader goals, and/ or values. The third general principle is described as "rolling with resistance". This involves avoiding arguing for change, lest this argumentation provokes greater resistance in the individual. The fourth principle is the need to support self-efficacy for change. As such, I intend to trial this approach in my school with L2 learners who are not doing well in their English classes. If successful, I shall seek to introduce a fully fledged motivational interviewing programme in the school. To conclude, *Table 5.1* sets out a flexible framework for reconfiguring L2 lessons according to a core set of motivational principles, in the light of my findings.



**Table 5.1: A Flexible framework for reconfiguring L2 lessons according to a core set of motivational principles**

Stage of L2 Motivation	"Look", and "Think"	How?	"Act"
The "predecisional" stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How do the learners value English?</li> <li>- How do the learners perceive their proficiency with regards to English?</li> <li>- Do the learners perceive effort to be more important than ability?</li> <li>- Do the learners like studying in the school environment?</li> </ul>	Listen to the learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Buzz" groups</li> <li>- Focus group interviews</li> <li>- Workshops</li> </ul>	Personalise the learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the negatives in their cognitions.</li> <li>- Build on and strengthen their adaptive motivational orientations.</li> <li>- Develop "growth" mindsets.</li> <li>- Introduce learner strategies, goal-setting strategies, and motivational strategies.</li> <li>- Be explicit about the required standards of the course, and reconcile these with the learners' own expectations.</li> <li>- Develop an autonomy supportive climate.</li> </ul>
The "postdecisional" stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are the learners motivated, both motivated and not motivated, or not motivated, (O, OX, X), during the lessons over time, from their perspective?</li> <li>- What key positive, and negative influences are impacting upon them over time in the classroom?</li> <li>- Are there any motivational imbalances between learners? If so, what are they?</li> <li>- What "multiple realities" are surfacing?</li> </ul>	Listen to the learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Debriefing sessions</li> <li>- Focus group interviews</li> <li>- A suggestion box</li> <li>- Workshops</li> <li>- Journals</li> <li>- Motivational interviewing</li> </ul>	Personalise the learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure the skills, tasks, and/ or activities are interesting, and relevant.</li> <li>- Choose authentic, and varied resources.</li> <li>- Let the learners choose some topics.</li> <li>- Gather information on their Multiple Intelligences.</li> <li>- Teach to the learners' strengths, not your own.</li> <li>- Widen your pedagogical repertoire.</li> <li>- Develop, and build the learners' self-efficacy.</li> <li>- Create a reward structure which is varied.</li> <li>- Provide cognitive autonomy support.</li> <li>- Facilitate positive class interactions.</li> <li>- Let learners choose whether they wish to work alone, in pairs or groups, on occasion.</li> <li>- Give students time to work on their own projects, on occasion.</li> <li>- Promote a happy, and positive environment.</li> <li>- Develop the learners' natural motivational orientations, (that is, intrinsic, and/ or extrinsic motivation).</li> <li>- Support the learners' natural inclination for autonomy, competence, and relatedness.</li> <li>- Promote active, and volitional forms of extrinsic motivation.</li> <li>- Do not put pressure on underperforming learners, (in grades), to change, but help them explore their ambivalence to language learning.</li> </ul>

## **5.2 Teachers as “Generators” of Knowledge, and/ or “Appliers” of Knowledge**

Having considered, in the light of my findings, and “reflection-on-action”, how to refine, and improve my professional practice, I then sought to see whether my ideas stood up to the critical scrutiny of teachers. Gradually, I started to introduce my findings at various school-wide language meetings, (in an informal fashion), and outline some of the key positive, and negative influences which I had found to impact upon L2 learners in this context. Many of my teacher colleagues supported my position that the factors that I had documented as affecting the motivational quality of the learning experience in my investigation, were of the utmost importance in their classes, too, (although it would be naive not to assume that these comments may have been affected by their natural collegiality). I also set out some principles related to Deci & Ryan’s (1985) self-determination theory, and Bandura’s (1986) self-efficacy theory, as well as Interest research, to illustrate that as teachers, we need to use this rich body of theory to our own specific educational ends, and on our own terms, in order to provide strong theoretical underpinnings to our work in the L2 classrooms.

Encouraged by these developments, which lent a degree of professional objectivity to my investigation, I then took another step, and introduced these findings to the school’s management group, (of which I am part), in order to put forward ideas to develop a student “voice”/ motivational programme for L2 learners in the Middle, and High schools. At the same time, I started to work on designing a computer programme in conjunction with IT specialists in my school to track L2 learners’ situation-specific motivation in the L2 classrooms over time, utilising my coding system, first



introduced in 4.3.1, in order to ensure that teachers would have a clearer picture of where their learners were “at”, in motivational terms over time in the classrooms.

Achieving this level of “discursive consciousness” subsequently led me to reflect upon some of the pedagogical messages we often receive as educators, and/ or language teachers. After all, we often accept uncritically “one-size-fits-all” pedagogical messages promoting the so-called “superiority” of a particular educational approach, and jump on the latest “bandwagon”. In fact, language courses often emphasise the superiority of a very particular pedagogical approach, for example, the “communicative” approach, the “collaborative approach”, “inquiry-based” language learning etc. With regards to the collaborative approach, Gross Davis (1993) reported that students who work in collaborative groups tend to be more satisfied with their classes (Beckman, 1990; Chickering & Gamson, 1991; Collier, 1980; Cooper and associates, 1990). But my findings in this context, caused me to question whether this type of “one-size-fits-all” pedagogical approach fits every L2 classroom in even one context, let alone in any context anywhere in the world. In fact, Schumann (1997) also provided evidence through extensive diary studies, and autobiographies of language learners, how a negative appraisal of a teaching method can lead to withdrawal from learning. This is an excerpt from a learner’s journal about the audiolingual method of language learning. “The rule was to listen, repeat and respond over and over for four hours. I hated the method. My anger bred to frustration which I acutely felt as my goal was to be a star performer in class, and I found it impossible to be so under these circumstances” (Schumann, 1997, p. 105).



A language teacher should perhaps not always wait for researchers to impose their thinking on them about the “best” teaching methods. And although I am not arguing that interpreting data from the standpoint of action as I have done in my investigation is a substitute for analysing data to achieve a certainty of knowledge, as more scientific research does, my investigation shows that as teachers we can generate our own knowledge, for use in our own specific contexts, on occasion. In fact, Stenhouse (1979) saw teaching as grounded in the research activity of the teacher. In addition, Elliott (1991) in analysing teachers’ fear of theory, argued that generalised knowledge about teachers’ practices “constitutes a denial of the individual practitioner’s everyday experience. It reinforces the powerlessness of teachers to define what is to count as knowledge about their practices (p. 46). What is required is that we “stop pretending that truths about education can be detached from our values, and discovered in contemplation rather than in action (Elliott, 1988, p. 193). Stenhouse (1979) believed that just as the teacher who uses research in their subject as a basis for teaching, (as I did in my investigation), means that they are doing research into the subject, through their teaching.

Unfortunately, policy-makers often look for a “science of teaching” or a “science of school management” which will demonstrate exactly what needs to be done for standards in schools to be raised, and inadvertently, overlook research like my investigation because it is not possible to generalise from the findings. Of course, it is not hard to understand why policy-makers look to research for help in formulating policy, or in recommending professional practice, and why they eventually become disillusioned and critical of, an activity that denies them the chance to generalise from one setting to another. But, as my investigation has demonstrated, with regards to L2

motivation, and its associated multiple realities, and the subsequent problems with measurement, there might not be a “magic bullet” or one pathway to achieve the goal of having motivated, engaged, knowledgeable, skilled, and happy L2 learners in all contexts. Policy-makers should consider that there might always be various ways in different contexts to achieve certain valued outcomes, with regards to topics like motivation. Perhaps the role of researchers should be to help schools understand the various options, and potential rewards, and risks of adopting different strategies based on scientific theory, and empirical evidence. Policy-makers cannot expect researchers to present their knowledge, meanings, and improvements to others, especially about a topic like motivation, and practitioners will take them to their context as ready-made solutions for their own problems, and issues. To illustrate, beginning in 1994, Smith, Donahue & Vibert (2001) carried out a major national study on student engagement in Canadian schools, and showed that context specificity was an important dimension of their project. But, that is, however, not to say that we cannot reach a general level of agreement about, for example, school conditions, and practices that support or thwart student engagement. However, as Vibert & Shields (2003) pointed out “a reified notion of student engagement as a phenomenon dislocated from time, place and intention and “reproduceable” through the introduction of various programmes and packages meant to engage students regardless of contexts and ideologies” (p. 236) is totally unrealistic. Perhaps, a movement away from efforts to uncover generalisable truths towards a new emphasis on local context is essential with such a complex construct as motivation.

And, in fact, findings based upon psychostatistical research can be greatly enriched by teachers undertaking case studies of their own teaching. After all, conducting my



own research led me to reflect that this activity might indeed be an integral role of a teacher, and therefore to deny teachers this right might well alienate them from their chosen vocation, and lead to an increasingly “Orwellian” vision of education. To illustrate my point, I found a research piece in the journal “Educational Psychology” that implied that cooperative learning is an “educational innovation”, and a superior method of teaching, hence it ought to be applied in more contexts. Abrami, Poulsen & Chambers (2004) applied expectancy theory to integrate the numerous, and disparate explanations that researchers, and educators have proposed to account for teacher resistance to implementing cooperative learning as an educational innovation. After all, as Abrami et al. (2004) stated “maximising the application of effective innovations is of great concern to program developers and to administrators anxious to improve the instructional methods employed in their schools” (p. 202). From its introduction, the language used in this article implied that teachers’ role was to “apply” the knowledge that others, (researchers), had “generated”. As they stated, after professional development some teachers apply this innovation with great enthusiasm, and persist until it becomes fully integrated into their teaching, whilst others never try the new teaching strategy, or return to their traditional teaching repertoire, after only a few initial attempts. Their view was that there needed to be increased emphasis on professional development to enhance teachers’ beliefs that they could succeed in implementing this innovation in their own context. And teachers who resist implementing this “innovation” will receive further training, and hopefully this will alter their expectancy of success. After all, it was expectancy of success issues that were most important in differentiating users, from non-users. In short, from their perspective, understanding the reasons why teachers vary in their implementation of educational innovations is essential to developing more effective



professional development programmes. The worrying thing about this perspective is not only the idea that one method of teaching is going to be superior in all contexts, at all times, but also the idea that teachers are going to accept being knowledge “appliers” rather than “generators”. Teachers probably did not go into the teaching profession with this type of role in mind. A quick check on web-sites of several Schools of Education in UK, showed that most courses in education, from B.Ed upwards, incorporate courses on being a “reflective” practitioner, and doing research about pedagogy. In addition, experienced teachers who have tried, and tested a variety of teaching methods may not take kindly to being told to adopt a new method over all other methods, when these, whilst far from perfect, may appear to be in part, effective, suitable, and appropriate in their classroom.

In sum, whether we are teachers, researchers, or teacher/ researchers, what we might all have to accept is that there are many different types of research in the field of education, as pointed out by Verma & Mallick (1999) but they are all united by one common goal, that is, to be “educative”, in the sense of being directly geared to improving educational practice. So, perhaps it would be helpful to take a wider view of research, and its purposes. In fact, Roulston et al. (2005) have shown that the application of a rigid scientific model of research adopted by policy-makers, and academics (in USA), has served to both “marginalise teachers’ voices and devalue teachers’ professional knowledge” (p. 173). Unfortunately, narrow traditional definitions of research seem to specifically discourage collaborative working between teacher/ researchers, and university lecturers, and inhibit practitioner involvement in a research process that does not seem to ask the questions that teachers are most interested in (Roulston et al. 2005). Perhaps researchers should “merge their separate

identity and collaborate with teachers in a common effort to resolve educational problems and improve educational practices” (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 127).

### 5.3 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have written about the need to promote an environment in which positive influences impacting on the learners' motivation are maximised, and built on, and negative influences are minimised, and downplayed. Key to this is reducing “motivational imbalances” between learners, which would probably be typical of any classroom, as demonstrated by the data reported in 4.3.1/2/3. The chapter therefore involved consideration of how I could “personalise” the learning to tailor my classes to the learners' motivational needs. Through action, and reflection, on my data, I came to recognise the importance of basing curricular, and pedagogical approaches upon a core set of motivational principles serving to meet students' diverse motivational needs, whilst as a teacher, acting as a “generator” of knowledge, as well as an “applier” of knowledge.



## **Chapter 6 The Discussion/ Conclusion**

### **6.1 Contributions to Knowledge**

By conceptualising L2 motivation as comprising both a “predecisional” stage as well as a “postdecisional” stage at the outset, and subsequently examining L2 motivation over time, as opposed to at specific time points, my investigation made several contributions to the body of knowledge about L2 motivation.

Firstly, it illuminated the differences between individuals’ sets of beliefs, and values, (their cognitions), and their engagement when faced with the events, and happenings in the situation-specific context of the L2 classrooms. This highlighted the importance of being absolutely clear about what aspect of motivation we might be describing, and targeting as researchers.

Secondly, it helped promote understanding about the dynamic nature of motivation as it plays out over time in the L2 classrooms in this context. In fact, it illustrated that motivation can be as much a feature, and outcome of these classrooms as it is an attribute of individual students, given that from their perspective, motivation was not stable. This finding was in line with Tsai, Kunter, Ludkte & Trautwein’s (2008) position that “interest is not a “fixed” entity, and students are sensitive to the learning conditions” (p. 468). Teachers in this context therefore need to consider if they should classify students on report cards as “motivated” or “not motivated”, as if it were a static “trait”, and reflect upon the dynamic, and volatile nature of the situation-specific aspect of L2 motivation in our particular context. Therefore, the importance,

(in pedagogical terms), in this context, of trying to “capture” students’ interest, in order to “hold” it over the extended time-frame required to learn English was hence underlined.

Thirdly, it also illuminated key positive, and negative influences that impacted upon the students when faced with the happenings, and events in the L2 classrooms on a day-to-day basis, in their own words. This also had important educational implications because as teachers, we need to have a clear understanding of these key influences, if we wish to improve the motivational quality of the L2 language learning experience for our learners. My investigation highlighted the serious impact of the skills, tasks, and activities, as well as the effects of students’ self-efficacy beliefs, and class interactions, on their motivation, in this context. And, as teachers, we need to be aware of the different ways that individuals may interpret exactly the same events, and happenings in the L2 classrooms. After all, little research about L2 motivation, has been carried out from this constructivist perspective, which begins with the thoughts, and feelings of the participants (Williams & Burden, 1999). Eisner (1992) stated “The facts never speak for themselves. What they say depends upon the questions we ask” (p. 14). Rich, and powerful insights about how to potentially transform the teaching, and learning in these classrooms were gleaned, and these underlined the importance of taking our agenda for motivational change, in part, from what the learners can tell us about their learning.

Fourthly, it demonstrated how motivational constructs, and definitions from mainstream psychology, can potentially be useful for L2 teachers, if they wish to refine, and improve their professional practice, as I had set out to do. Even although



there are clearly problems with the conceptualisation of motivation in the field, my investigation showed how it has never been more important for L2 teachers like myself, to use theoretical ways of understanding motivation, as the underpinnings, and foundations to refine, and improve professional practice, in order to support L2 learners, not only academically, but also socially, and emotionally, in L2 classrooms.

Most specifically, three of the theories chosen at the outset of my investigation, namely, Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory, and interest research, seemed to potentially have great practical utility, in this context. With regards to Deci & Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, to build language learning around an individual's natural inclination for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, seemed appropriate in this context. After all, autonomy is often neglected in the classrooms, due to the hierarchical social arrangements in them, as shown by Katz et al. (2006). And, we should also provide cognitive autonomy support, which emphasises support for students' engagement in cognitive activities. Then, by also harnessing the concept of self-efficacy, and stimulating the personal, and situation-specific interest of the learners in the classrooms, a high level of autonomy might be potentially achieved. Therefore, this investigation provided a description of how they could be potentially be used together in a complimentary, and powerful way.

Finally, it also raised some key methodological issues which are relevant to both qualitative, and quantitative research. Most specifically, it highlighted how on occasion, the qualitative can shed light upon issues to do with the quantitative. In fact, this finding highlighted how important it is not to be seduced by "false dualisms", like



this distinction between qualitative, and quantitative approaches, which supposedly invoke different “paradigms”, and “epistemologies”. In fact, the divisions between the two seem to have become too sharp, and that is reflected through the respective language used, for example, “objectivity/ subjectivity”, “reality/ multiple realities”, “truth/ consensus”, “knowledge/ opinion”, “understanding/ perception”. Pring (2000) argued that by choosing one way of describing the world cannot capture the richness which is present in that non-technical everyday understanding of experience, which no matter how hard we try to ignore it, for the purposes of science, or theoretical sophistication, cannot dispense with “the world of real life” (p. 248). Dewey (1916) also condemned the opposition of body and mind, theoretical knowledge and practice, physical mechanisms and ideal purpose (p. 291).

But, as well as discussing, and debating whether we should be using quantitative, and/ or qualitative methods to access L2 motivation, we should perhaps be asking other key questions, such as whether we actually can access self-knowledge, and thereby L2 motivational variables, or whether individuals can self-report. Although self-report is considered to be a logical, and defensible research methodology, as stated by Martin (2008), my investigation highlighted the importance of examining the same constructs, for example, effort, desire, and attitudes, using data derived from additional sources, for example, teachers, and/ or researchers. This position is in line with Tsai, Kunter, Ludkte & Trautwein’s (2008) view that further research should use multiple sources of information, (for example, “teacher reports, third-person observations, analysis of instructional tasks), to provide more objective perceptions of instruction” (p. 470).

Researchers in the field of L2 research must consider the above points carefully since self-reports are not usually used in tandem with behavioural corollaries. To compound matters further, an individual will be asked not only to self-report about their general motivation, but also their situation-specific motivation, which will include how much effort they will exert in the L2 classroom, at the start of the learning period, detached from the learning context. This “global” picture of their L2 motivation might not bear much resemblance to their motivation in the actual classroom though. It is important to take note that some individuals, (whether high performing or low performing according to their grades), would not necessarily be able to report on how much effort they expended in L2 learning objectively at the outset, for example, Bobby in Phase A, (*Table 4.28*), and Georgie in Phase B, (*Table 4.19*). In fact, they would probably report on this, in a way referenced to their own particular standards, so therefore Georgie’s idea of 5 on a Likert scale, would not be the same as Bobby’s. And, interestingly enough, there seemed to be an interesting parallel with regards to self-efficacy judgements. Pajares (1996) stated that problems of mis-measurement have plagued self-efficacy research, and the problem is because, as judgements of self-efficacy are task, and domain specific, global or inappropriately defined self-efficacy assessments weaken effect. Bandura (1986) also cautioned researchers attempting to predict academic outcomes from students’ self-efficacy beliefs. Perhaps judgements of motivation should be more task specific, too.

Finally, it convinced me that as teachers, we should do our own research whilst teaching, as suggested by Stenhouse (1979), in order to be both a “generator”, and an “applier” of knowledge, as suggested by Elliott (2003). This might be one way of improving the motivational quality of the learning experience for linguistically, and



culturally diverse language learners. And, in fact, with the sheer numbers of linguistically, and culturally diverse learners all around the world who are seeking to learn English, and inevitably often end up in the same L2 classrooms, my investigation perhaps highlighted that we need to “personalise” the learning, as we attempt to meet the variety of learners’ motivational needs, given that learners may see the same events, and happenings in entirely different ways. Perhaps that includes seeking to understand the complex “multiple realities” of the L2 classrooms. And to achieve this aim, rigid sets of rules for approaching social science research might sometimes constrain the discovery, and focus of the object of research, (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 188). In fact, the interactive research process utilised in my investigation illustrated that regardless of how much planning, and preparation are undertaken in advance, there can be no substitute for involvement in a “real” research situation, which plays out over time.

In sum, my investigation had exceedingly promising implications in educational terms in this context for it illustrated that if motivation is as much a feature of the classrooms as it is a product of individual students, then motivation, and/ or interest can be used in more powerful ways than merely for the purposes of categorising learners, and/ or rationalising their current L2 learning progress, or lack thereof. By looking at motivation through a “different window” from the dominant paradigms, in order to understand how L2 motivation played out over time as opposed to at specific time points in the classrooms, my investigation drew attention to the difference between the rhetoric, and the reality of motivation, in this context. The importance of conducting “close-to-the-field” research which does justice to the meaning-making that occurs there is clearly an important part of the responsibility of the educational



research community. Therefore, beyond a shadow of a doubt, L2 classroom issues really need to be firmly on the motivational research agenda.

## 6.2 Future Research Directions

In the light of my findings, there is much scope for further research.

Firstly, given that I was not able to show whether a whole series of happenings, and events in the situation-specific context could eventually impact upon the general motivation to learn English, in either positive or negative ways, I could now extend the time-frame of an investigation to at least 2-3 years, in order to understand more about the long-term motivation when faced with events, and happenings in different grade levels, and in different L2 classes. For example, Edward, (*Table 4.23*), and Bobby, (*Table 4.28*), might become motivated again in another L2 class, with another teacher, and different classmates. This type of longitudinal investigation would contribute in a more in-depth way to the ongoing debate discussed in 4.3.1 about whether motivation is stable or not over the long-term, from the perspective of teenagers.

Secondly, investigating several other subjects, for example, Humanities, and Mathematics etc, as well as English, would contribute to the key debate about whether there are similarities, and/ or differences between L2 motivation, and the general “motivation to learn” (a subject), as mentioned in 1.1. For example, Tsai, Kunter, Ludkte & Trautwein (2008) selected three subjects in their investigation: Maths, German, (the medium of instruction), and a foreign language.

Thirdly, investigating motivation outside of school hours, (not just within the narrow confines of the L2 classrooms), could facilitate greater understanding about

how social processes partly impinge upon academic motivation. It would therefore be of research interest to examine whether participants have the same type of ambivalent attitudes to speaking, and using English outside of school hours that Norton Pierce (1995, 2000) identified in her research about immigrant women, as set out in 2.2.1. Given that my findings showed that the broader society, and culture had clearly influenced the participants' sets of beliefs, and values, (4.2.2/4), there would be much scope to investigate the role of social processes in academic motivation.

Fourthly, investigating what the different stages of L2 motivation comprised would also be a related possible investigation. After all, my investigation showed that there seem to be at least two different stages, and thus Dornyei & Otto's (1998) Process Model of L2 Motivation could be evaluated, and analysed in more detail. After all, the issue of conceptual clarity is of central importance to L2 motivation. As Schunk (2000) pointed out "if investigators define or operationalise constructs differently they should explain their points of divergence and the basis for them" (p. 116).

Fifthly, the process of engagement, (the situation-specific aspect of motivation), and also how to measure it, which seems difficult to do, needs to be investigated in more detail. As Schunk (2000) pointed out "how students maintain their goals, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, expectancies for success in the face of many difficulties" (p. 118) is of great research interest. Further research needs to shed light upon why some individuals are unable to put their initial wish or desire to learn English into action, whereas others are. In many ways, my investigation has now cleared the ground for quantitative investigations on this issue. In fact, by measuring differences between the traditional L2 self-report measures, and some form of trace



measure, as recent research by Zimmermann (2008) in the related field of SRL has done, using computer tracking, (see 2.2.1 for discussion), to explore potential discrepancies might be a promising option for L2 research.

Finally, there is a pressing need to design various intervention programmes based on either the core set of motivational principles set forth in this investigation, (5.1), and/ or based upon other recent theoretical, and/ or empirical work in the field. Wentzel & Wigfield (2007) pointed out that the topic of interventions designed to enhance students' motivation, and engagement is a timely one, since they know of no other publications about it. After reconfiguring my lessons according to this core set of motivational principles, I now need to set out to conduct an intervention study whereby I measure whether the learners' motivation actually increases over time, utilising a pre-/ post-treatment/ control group design, as Martin (2008) did, in his attempt to enhance student motivation, and engagement, through his multi-dimensional intervention. In addition, it would also be possible to trial the motivational interviewing technique introduced in Chapter 5, also using a pre-/ post-treatment/ control group design, in order to see whether it could resolve ambivalence in language learning behaviour. In addition, there is scope for further interventions with regards to cognitive autonomy support, which has been proposed as another dimension of autonomy support, (Stefanou et al. 2004). This could also be investigated using the abovementioned pre-/post-treatment. To date, there have been little direct empirical investigations about this concept in classrooms.

### 6.3 The Conclusion

This investigation has been an insightful, and powerful account of processes that go beyond this particular story itself, about possibly one of the most universally important educational issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is time to stop downplaying and/or neglecting the situation-specific aspect of motivation, since this affords the only opportunity as educators, and/ or researchers to look at motivation through a “different window” from the dominant paradigms, and deepen understanding about key motivational processes as they play out in the L2 classrooms, which must subsequently be utilised to improve the motivational quality of individuals’ language learning experiences. As educators whilst we are teaching, we must always remember that motivation may be as much a feature, and outcome of L2 classrooms, as it is an attribute of individual students, and never forget the subsequent powerful implications associated with this finding.

This investigation has come to an end, but in many ways it is just the beginning for there is still much to learn about the motivational foundation of L2 instruction. As such, we need to listen more carefully to not only our students, but teachers too, as they struggle to become knowledge “generators”, in this case, in order to deliver motivationally conscious teaching practice in their L2 classrooms, as well as continuing to be “appliers” of knowledge.



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**Phase A: Questionnaire 1 (Appendix A)**

- 1) Name:
- 2) Age:
- 3) Sex:
- 4) Grade:
- 5) Nationality:
- 6) Your mother tongue:
- 7) Father's mother tongue:
- 8) Mother's mother tongue:
- 9) Country of origin:
- 10) Language you are now learning (L2):
- 11) Language you speak at home:
- 12) How long have you been studying your L2?:
- 13) How many years have you been in an international school?:
- 14) How many years have you been in ISS:
- 15) How many years have you lived in Singapore?:
- 16) What other countries have you lived in?
- 17) If yes, to the above for how long?:
- 18) How important is it for you to become proficient in English? (Circle one)  
Very Important      Important      Quite Important      Not Important at all

19) Why do you want to learn English? (Tick those that apply.)

Interested in the language

Interested in the culture

Have friends who speak the language

Required to take English in school

Need this language for a future career

Need this language for travel

Need this language for career

Need this language to get money

Any other reasons?:

20) How much effort do you put into learning English, in your opinion? (Circle one)

The most effort possible

Quite a bit of effort

An average amount of effort

Not much effort at all

21) Do you like learning other subjects in English? Why? Why not?

(Write what you want to.)

22) Do you like learning in an international environment?

Why?

Why not?

(Write what you want to.)



**Phase A: Questionnaire 2 and Interview (Appendix B)**

**The “Preactional” Stage**

**GOAL SETTING**

Do you have a goal/s in relation to English in general? What is it/ are they? Why?

Do you have any goal/s in relation to this English class at the start of this semester?  
What is it/ are they? Why?

Do you have any future goal/s in relation to English? What are they? Why?

What are your wishes and hopes in terms of English?

Do you have a lot of opportunities to learn English or not? Give examples.

Do you think it is important to know English and be internationally-minded or not?  
Why?/ Why not?

If you know English nowadays, what kind of benefits will you get?

Are you confident that you will achieve your goal/s in English or not ?  
Why?/ Why not?

Do you parents think it is really important to be good at English or not?

Why?/ Why not?

Do your friends think it is really important to be good at English or not?

Why?/ Why not?

Do your teachers think it is really important to be good at English? Why?/ Why not?

Is it good to know English in your country? Why? Why not?



Do you like to do well in English because you enjoy doing the tasks and enjoy doing well at the tasks? Why?/ Why not?

Do you like doing well in English so that you are as good as/ or better than the other people in the class? Explain.

**Intention formation**

Do you expect to achieve your goal/s? Why?/ Why not?

Do you think this goal/s is important? Why?/ Why not?

Are you determined to achieve your goal/s? Why? Why not?

What commitment do you have to achieving your goal/goals? Explain.

Is there any urgent reason why you have to achieve this goal/s?

(ie. foreign travel, IB, University etc.....) Explain.



**Initiation of Intention Enactment**

What's your action plan then?

Do you have the right means and resources to achieve your goal? Why?/ Why not?

Will it be easy to achieve your goal or not? Explain.

What usually distracts (stops) you from achieving your goal? Explain.

What will happen if you don't achieve your goal? Explain.

**General**

Why have you decided to learn English?

Does English have value for you or not? Explain.

How motivated are your friends to learn English?

Do you want to do your English work in this class? Why? Why not?

Can you do your English work? Why? Why not?

What does success or doing well in English mean to you? Explain.

Are you doing well in English at the moment? Why? Why not?

Will a student do really well if they work really hard at English? Why?

Will a student do really well because they are just naturally good at English. Explain.



Are you prepared to go on learning English for a long time so you can master English? Why? Why not?

How hard are you prepared to try at English? Explain.

Would you describe yourself as motivated to learn English or not? Explain.

**Phase A: The Participants' Journals (Appendix C)**

At the end of the lesson:

I was motivated (give reasons)	I was not motivated (give reasons)

### **Phase A: My Field-Notes (Appendix D)**

The field-notes must document all observed language learning behaviour in class in order to help inform the stimulate-recall interview. These field-notes must document clearly what language learning behaviour is being demonstrated by the participants, and will be written in a narrative. These lessons will be taped.

**Appendix D-1:** All information about the course, course materials, course assignments, teachers' comments about course assignments must be collected, documented, and analysed.



**Phase A: The Stimulated-Recall Interview (Appendix E)**

**Lesson No:**

**Participant:**

**My comments**

**Participants' comments from journals**

I will go through each lesson specifically asking open-ended questions about their language learning behaviour in each and every lesson from Lesson 1 onwards.

**From the participants' journals (Appendix C)**

In X lesson, you said you did not like this task because.....

In Y Lesson, you said you really enjoyed the speaking activity,.....

What do you mean by that etc?

**From my field-notes (Appendix D)**

I noticed in X lesson that you were talking a lot in Mandarin....

I noticed that you were working very hard on X task.....

Why was that?

**Phase B: Questionnaire 1 (Appendix A)**

- 1) Name:
- 2) Age:
- 3) Sex:
- 4) Grade:
- 5) Nationality:
- 6) Your mother tongue:
- 7) Father’s mother tongue:
- 8) Mother’s mother tongue:
- 9) Country of origin:
- 10) Language you are now learning (L2):
- 11) Language you speak at home:
- 12) How long have you been studying your L2?:
- 13) How many years have you been in an international school?:
- 14) How many years have you been in ISS:
- 15) How many years have you lived in Singapore?:
- 16) What other countries have you lived in?
- 17) If yes, to the above for how long?:
- 18) How important is it for you to become proficient in English? (Circle one)  

Very ImportantImportantQuite ImportantNot Important at all



19) Why do you want to learn English? (Tick those that apply.)

Interested in the language

Interested in the culture

Have friends who speak the language

Required to take English in school

Need this language for a future career

Need this language for travel

Need this language for career

Need this language to get money

Any other reasons?:

20) How much effort do you put into learning English, in your opinion? (Circle one)

The most effort possible

Quite a bit of effort

An average amount of effort

Not much effort at all

21) Do you like learning other subjects in English? Why? Why not?

(Write what you want to.)

22) Do you like learning in an international environment?

Why?

Why not?

(Write what you want to.)

**Phase B: Four 500-word Essays about Key L2 Motivational Themes**

**(Appendix B)**

Write a 500-word essay about each of these prompts:

- 1) How important is English to you? Explain.
- 2) How satisfied are you with your proficiency in English?
- 3) Is effort and/ or ability more important with regards to learning English?
- 4) Do you like studying in an international school environment?  
What are the advantages and/ or disadvantages?

**Phase B: The Participants' Journals (Appendix C)**

At the end of the lesson:

I was motivated (give reasons)	I was not motivated (give reasons)



## **Phase B: My Field-Notes (Appendix D)**

These field-notes must document clearly what language learning behaviour is being demonstrated by the participants, and will be written in a narrative. These lessons will be taped.

**Appendix D-1:** All information about the course, course materials, course assignments, my comments about course assignments must be collected, documented, and analysed.

**Appendix 1: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**TITLE OF PROJECT:**

Motivation in Context in an International School in Singapore.

*(This research project is approved by Durham University's Ethics Advisory Committee)*

CIRCLE

Have you read the Participant Information sheet? Yes/No

Have you had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study? Yes/No

Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions? Yes/No

Have you received enough information about the study? Yes/No

Who have you spoken to? Dr/ Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/ Prof:

Do you consent to participate in this study? Yes/No

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study

- at any time
- without having to give a reason for withdrawing
- without affecting your position in school?

Yes/No

Do you understand that the recordings and transcripts  
will be destroyed on completion of the study? Yes/No

Do you understand that any subsequent publication  
will not identify you in any way? Yes/No

Signed:.....

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS).....

Signature of Witness:.....

(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS).....



## **Appendix 2: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**TITLE OF STUDY:** Motivation in Context in an International School in Singapore.

**RESEARCHER:** TANYA HAMES

As discussed several times in class, and as you all know, I am Tanya Hames and I am working on my thesis for my Doctorate in Education at the University of Durham, UK.

I am interested in finding out more about your motivation to learn English in an international context over the course of a learning period. What motivational influences are affecting you? How does your motivation change over time?

I am so glad that you have all agreed to be participants in this study. You will be able to give your opinions and views as freely as you want. You can say anything you want. As discussed too, we will be really talking **a lot** about motivation.

### **What is motivation?**

*Motivation means why you have chosen to do something, how long you are going to try to do it, and how hard you are going to try at it.*

You will give your views and opinions about:

- 1) your motivation to learn English at the start of the learning period.
- 2) what motivational influences are affecting you in each and every class over the learning period.

Any interviews will be recorded and transcribed. I solemnly **PROMISE** that only me (Tanya Hames) and my supervisor (from Durham University) can read these transcripts. The school **DOES NOT HAVE** access to these. You can have the tapes and a copy of the transcripts if you want, at the end of the final project, as these recordings and transcripts will be destroyed on completion of the thesis. You will not be named in this study, (YOU WILL BE **ANONYMOUS**). Your identity will be protected **AT ALL TIMES**. This thesis may contain anonymous quotations from the data but these will be written to protect the identity of you. You can refuse to answer any of the questions and are free to withdraw from the research at any time. Participation in this study is voluntary and neither consent nor refusal will involve any reward or disadvantage to any participant.

### **Appendix 3: Report for the participants**

This study about motivation in the second language classrooms, showed that:

- 1) There are differences between what students think and believe about motivation, and what they do once in the classroom. For example, some students thought that English was very important for their future, but they still did not always work very hard in class.
- 2) In the classrooms, students' motivation changed depending on the skills, tasks, and/ or activities they had to do. Also, students' motivation was affected by whether they felt confident that they could do the skills, tasks, and/ or activities. Students were also affected in good and bad ways by interactions with others in the class.
- 3) This information will now be used to help me improve my teaching in the L2 classrooms.

